

THE DIAL

JUNE 1923

THE APOSTLE

BY GEORGE MOORE

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

ESORA—*his housekeeper*

JESUS OF NAZARETH

A SERVANT

JEDAIAH—*a camel-herd*

JACOB—*a young shepherd*

HAZAEI—*President of the Essenes*

MATHIAS

SADDOC

MANAHEM

CALEB

ELEAZOR

ELIAKIM

SHALLUM

} *Essene monks*

PAUL OF TARSUS

PROBUS—*a Roman soldier*

PRISCILLA

AQUILA

APOLLOS

EUNICE

TIMOTHY

PRELUDE: June, A.D. 33. Two months after the Crucifixion. The garden of Joseph of Arimathea's home on the Mount of Olives.

ACT I: *Twenty years later. Interior of the cenoby of the Essenes on a shelf of rock in the gorge of the brook Kerith. Evening.*

ACT II: *The same. Sunrise.*

ACT III: *A room in the house in Caesarea. Four days later. Evening.*

PRELUDE

Two months after the Crucifixion. The garden of the house of Joseph of Arimathea on the Mount of Olives. When the curtain rises Joseph is discovered sitting on a bench near the trees with a letter in his hand.

JOSEPH (*rising*): So the robbers have broken out on the hills again—more wheat and camels captured. (*He stops and looks through the olive trees as if he were expecting somebody.*) Esora will be able to tell me how many when she returns from Jerusalem. (*Crosses and returns.*) She has been delayed . . . I wonder . . . Ah! here she comes, and overladen with her basket. I must go to her help.

(Joseph goes out and returns immediately after, carrying a basket on his right arm and helping Esora with his left.)

ESORA: I am late, Master, I know it, but the way is hot and weary down into the valley, and the climb up to Jerusalem—

JOSEPH: With a heavy basket on thine arm, not less wearisome.

ESORA: It wouldn't have been felt ten years ago. My troth on it, the sun is fierce on these hillsides! I can't talk; my tongue is thick. A cup of water, Joseph, if thou wouldst hear me. (*Joseph goes out. Esora walks to the bench from which Joseph has risen, and sits. Joseph returns with a cup of water. Esora drinks and hands him back the cup.*) Thou hast lost a convoy.

JOSEPH: I know it, and bread will be dearer next week in Jerusalem.

ESORA: It will indeed. And if another caravan be pillaged—

JOSEPH: Bread will be still dearer. . . . What hast thou brought back, Esora?

ESORA: A quarter of a lamb, enough for all of us and something over. A fine beast was this lamb, so plump that I could not part with the rest of him, and the three-quarters will be sent on to-night, the butcher's word on it; and if he change him for another

I shall know it, and will never stop to cheapen with him again, but go on to another stall.

JOSEPH: The lamb has overburdened thee, Esora.

ESORA: If I had nothing but the lamb in the basket. . . .

(*She takes out two chickens.*) Good chickens; feel their breasts.

I have no fault to find with them. But put a guess upon the price, Joseph. Nor wilt thou ever guess it, nor half of it.

JOSEPH: Half a shekel?

ESORA: We have not come to that yet, but soon we shall. The prices are going up and up, putting gloom into the faces, setting the people asking how they are to live through the winter, for prices will be higher then than now. But I have not told thee all.

JOSEPH: Not all! (*Rising.*) What art thou withholding from me, Esora? (*He stands looking for a moment through the olive trees and then turns to her.*) Tell me, do the people speak against me? And what reason do they urge? What would the people have me do?

ESORA (*rising*): Listen to me, Joseph. The people are crying out that thou shouldst have asked for soldiers.

JOSEPH: But I command no soldiers. (*He stands thinking.*)

ESORA: Thou shouldst have asked for soldiers since thou hast the ear of Pilate; so they are saying.

JOSEPH: And blaming me for the fine string of camels I have lost?

ESORA: They are indeed; and the talk of the market is that Pilate will have to bestir himself and put the robbers on crosses if the poor are to live.

JOSEPH: So Pilate and I are the culprits! Yet before our coming there was not a league of road safe between Jerusalem and Moab.

ESORA: I durst not tell thee all I have heard against thee and Pilate—hard words everywhere, betokening stirs, quarrels, riots, later.

JOSEPH: So I am bedded with Pilate and rated with him.

ESORA: It is as thou sayest; but blame me not for bringing thee all tidings that befall.

JOSEPH: And in a city for which I have done so much.

ESORA: Pilate is not well reckoned of by the Zealots. And there is much else I would tell thee, Joseph. (*Pause.*)

JOSEPH: Tell me all thou hast heard. But beware, Esora, that thou dost not seem to side with thy master, lest the hand go to the mouth at sight of thee.

ESORA: I greet all they say with smiles and nods, and never fail

to scowl when, to test me, they say: Ever since Pilate rid the hills of robbers, bread is cheap in Jerusalem.

JOSEPH: Pilate is cursed for being here; he is cursed for not sending soldiers to rid the hills of robbers; and he is cursed if he puts them upon crosses. The people are hard to understand, Esora.

ESORA: Troth and faith! they are; for going among them as I do with an ear for everybody's say, all I get from some is that the Romans should leave the city, whilst others would have them remain, else prophecy begin again and prophets head the people against the priests. (*Nudging him.*) Art dreaming, Joseph?

JOSEPH: But it is with my father's money that I fetch wheat from Moab. Were it with Roman money the people would have cause of complaint against me.

ESORA: It is said that Pilate shares with thee.

JOSEPH: My father asked for my promise that the enterprise should bring no profit to Pilate, and my answer to Pilate is known in Jerusalem. The fish salter of Galilee gives the money and Pilate the soldiers to make safe the roads for the caravans. We work together for good, Esora.

ESORA: The people know the truth well enough.

JOSEPH: But the people believe according to their passions rather than their reason. What wouldst thou have me do, Esora?

ESORA: I would have thee withdraw thyself from the counsels of Pilate for a time at least.

JOSEPH: It would seem that I am always being asked to withdraw from somebody's company. The corn trade will bring thee great profit, Joseph, my father said, and when I am gone and the fish salting comes to thee, thou'lt be the richest man in Syria. In saying these words he foresaw in me the happiest man in Syria, and to make my happiness doubly sure he exacted another promise—that I should withdraw myself from Jesus of Nazareth and his company.

ESORA: Thy father is a Jew of old time, and he was told that Jesus had said he could destroy the Temple and build it again in three days; and ever since, his face darkens when the name of Jesus of Nazareth is spoken.

JOSEPH: But the Temple Jesus had in mind is in the soul. My father should have understood.

ESORA: Traditions and observances are part of him, and it is reported that Jesus said: The law is of no account.

JOSEPH: Nor is it if the love of God be in our hearts. As thou sayest, Dan is a Jew of old time and his understanding is closed to the new. I would not think ill of him, but I cannot forget that a prophet who tells fishermen to lay aside their nets finds but little favour with a fish salter.

(Sounds as of the felling of trees are heard from the olive grove.)

ESORA: Hearken! Somebody is felling trees; and there is a smell of burning in the air.

JOSEPH: Jesus is burning last year's leaves and gathering decayed branches for fuel. He came to me asking for an adze—

ESORA: And thou gavest it to him?

JOSEPH: Why not, Esora? There are many trees about that have almost ceased to bear fruit, and in their places young trees will be planted.

ESORA: But it is of his hands I am thinking, not yet hard for the wielding of an adze.

JOSEPH: Have no fear; he is too weak for much work. Hearken! he has stopped already, and were the trees fewer between us we should see him leaning on his adze, lost in a dream of Galilee. We are three Galileans, and the lake is never far from our thoughts.

ESORA: Did he speak to thee of Galilee, of returning thither?

JOSEPH: No. Why dost thou ask?

ESORA: Thou tellest what it pleases thee to tell and withholdest what thou pleasest, for we are master and servant. *(Pause.)*

JOSEPH: Say on, Esora.

ESORA: The people are talking in Jerusalem of Jesus of Nazareth and Joseph of Arimathea—

JOSEPH: Who received the body of the Nazarene for burial.

ESORA: And every time thy name is spoken my heart stands still, and I wait for somebody to step forward, saying: I spied him on the night of the crucifixion bringing home a dead man on his shoulders.

JOSEPH: My servant truly thou art, but the word sounds harsh; mother would sound better, for I lay upon thy breast, Esora, and thy hand led my first steps.

ESORA: My hands rocked thy cradle, washed and dressed thee.

JOSEPH: And thou'rt trusted as none other.

ESORA: Why then was I not told that the man yonder is Pilate's

crucified? Harken! he is at work again. I must forbid him lest the half-healed wounds should open.

JOSEPH: Stay, Esora. I would tell thee that my wits were not with me the night I brought Jesus of Nazareth home upon my shoulders; and afterwards remembrance of the promise to my father kept the words back whenever I sought to speak them, for thou'rt his servant as much as mine.

ESORA: And coming from Galilee to abide thy orders, cured his wounds without putting questions to thee. . . . I must go.

JOSEPH: There is no need; the garth is silent again. . . . I left Galilee to keep the promise to my father; and when the disciples prepared a triumphant entry into Jerusalem for Jesus, I rode away lest a sudden movement of the heart should compel me to join in their welcome, to cry: Hosanna, Son of David!

ESORA: For many weeks a moodiness was upon thee; but it was on the night of thy return from Jericho—

JOSEPH: The masons coming from my tomb cried: Thy tomb is finished, Master. I reined in, for Jesus was in my thoughts; I needed news of him. And they answered me: Jesus of Nazareth was condemned by Pilate, and is hanging on a cross between two robbers. And when I rode up the mount the robbers were straining their heads high in the air above the cross-bar. But Jesus's head was sunk upon his chest. I rode on to Pilate, returning with a centurion and an order that the body was to be delivered to me. Mary and Martha were at the foot of the cross and they followed to the tomb, and when the women had gone their way to prepare the oils and spices for embalmment, I entered to bid him farewell. The sheet that covered his face had fallen, and as I was about to replace it he stirred under the winding-sheet. I walked out of the tomb, frightened by this resurrection, but hearing no sound of footsteps or voices, I began to ask myself if my strength was enough to carry him up the steep, narrow way. So frail a body cannot be of great weight even up this hillside, I said, lifting him, but the words of the promise I had given to my father returning to me suddenly, I laid him back, though only for a moment did I hesitate. My father would not have had me roll back the stone and leave Jesus to die; and ashamed of my thoughts—

ESORA: As thou mightest well be! If Dan had been with thee, he'd have helped thee, hoisting the frail body on to thy fine broad

shoulders, given thee for the burden. A frail body, but all burdens are heavy up that hillside, as this basket has often learnt me.

JOSEPH: It took all my strength to get him hither.

ESORA: And my balsam to cure him.

JOSEPH: Thou knowest the rest of the story, and it would have remained between us two if Mary and Martha had not gone to the tomb on Sunday morning.

ESORA: Martha and Mary have been talking ever since; and now the say of Jerusalem is: Joseph of Arimathea is a Nazarene, else he would not have gone to Pilate to ask for the body; he is hiding the body so that the people may believe in the resurrection of Jesus. The say of others is that Jesus is not dead, and the Zealots speak of a search, which will not be a long one; their first pounce will be upon this house. Master, we love him and would save him from his enemies, and to save him we can do no more than send him to some Greek city.

JOSEPH: What thinkest thou of Caesarea?

ESORA: Caesarea or any other city, so long as he goes hence; and the sooner he goes the better, for we know not when the search will begin.

JOSEPH: Go to him, Esora; bring him to me. We will talk to him together.

ESORA: He will come to our wishes if our words reach his mind, but his memory comes and goes, rustles like a wind among the olive trees and is off again. (*Jesus comes up the stage carrying a large bundle of faggots on his back. Esora goes to meet him.*) Thy bundle is too heavy for thee, good Jesus. Lay it aside, for thy master would speak with thee. (*She tries to take the bundle from Jesus, but he resists her.*)

JOSEPH: Esora is afraid that thy strength is not enough for the carrying of large bundles.

JESUS: The sticks are light, and with the adze I can make up many bundles.

ESORA: Chopping wood is hard upon the hands. Show me thy hands, Jesus. (*She looks at his hands.*) The wounds are nearly cured. (*She shows Jesus's hands to Joseph.*)

JOSEPH: Yes, thy hands are well cured; but chopping wood with an adze is not work for thee, Jesus, not yet, and we have much to say that concerns thee. . . . Art tired?

JESUS: No; but I cannot talk as I did in old time.

JOSEPH: But soon thou wilt: sea breezes will restore thee to health and strength, and having business in Caesarea, methinks we might journey thither. (*Jesus turns to go. Joseph detains him.*) We are thy friends and would consult thy wishes, but we have reasons for wishing thee in some Greek city.

JESUS: In some Greek city?

JOSEPH: Thy wounds are cured, and Esora thinks—

JESUS: My wounds!

JOSEPH: Only in a Greek city wilt thou be free.

JESUS: Much work is still to be done in the garden.

JOSEPH: But faggoting in an olive garden is not thy work.

JESUS: What wouldst thou have me do?

JOSEPH: On any day I may be called to Galilee; my father is an old man; and I would not leave thee here alone.

JESUS: Why not leave me here, since God has called me hither?

JOSEPH: Thou'lt weary alone.

JESUS: Enough for me is my work, and when it is done I rest, hearkening to the summer in the branches.

JOSEPH: We would have thee go to some Greek city, for there thou'lt find disciples—

JESUS: What should I be among them? First a gazing and then a jeering-stock. Let me stay here.

JOSEPH: But thou hast raked all the dead leaves into heaps.

JESUS: And they are burning now; the smoke smells sweet on the air. I have gathered many faggots, but not enough for Esora's winter fires. Come and see the work I've done with the adze thou gavest me.

JOSEPH (*turning to Esora and taking her aside*): It is like speaking into an empty room; only a faint echo answers me; words drift across his mind, no sooner heard than forgotten. But his mind is coming back slowly and we must have patience with him, putting our trust in God, who will not forsake him.

ESORA: But God did forsake him.

JOSEPH: He believed that Pilate had no power over him and that God would send angels to release him from the cross, and so he is like one in a smother of dream.

ESORA: God must have foreseen all, for all things are in God.

JOSEPH: I have often asked myself why God did not send angels.

ESORA: It may be that his Father has withdrawn his favour from him.

JOSEPH: Mayhap his ears still retain the murmur of the people acclaiming him the Son of David.

ESORA: And that he feels his place is here till God calls him into his counsels again.

JOSEPH: We must not awaken him from his dreams, come what may.

ESORA: But speak we must, else we perish together.

(As Esora moves towards Jesus a Servant enters.)

SERVANT: Jedaiah, thy camel-driver, is at the gate asking for thee, Master.

JOSEPH: Jedaiah, my camel-herd from Moab! Let him come in. *(Exit Servant.)* Come with tidings of a further loss of camels!

ESORA: Were the trouble but the loss of a caravan we could bear it. *(Enter Jedaiah, followed by a dog.)* At sight of thee, my good Jedaiah, I guess evil tidings.

JEDAIAH: We had crossed the plain and reached the ascent from the sea; we were by the Kerith hills when the gangrel rogues ran out from the rocks where they were hiding.

JOSEPH: How many camels?

JEDAIAH: Seven, Master; and half the corn still at Moab.

JOSEPH: Which we shall lose if we try to bring it to Jerusalem. Let not a camel stir out of Moab till thou hast word from me that the roads are safe.

JEDAIAH: So like are my thoughts to thine, Master, that before coming to thee I went to Pilate and said that soldiers should guard the caravans, and he answered: The hills must be made safe for caravans.

ESORA: Before the hills are freed of robbers bread will be a penny a loaf in Jerusalem.

JOSEPH *(to Jedaiah)*: What else did Pilate say to thee?

JEDAIAH: That an expedition would be sent into the hills. He spoke of lowering the soldiers in baskets down the cliff sides to the robbers' caves, but I told him that the burning of a few trusses of wet straw would compel the robbers to choose between choking within or being cut down as they pass out; and Pilate answered: We will not cut them down as they rush out, but will take them prisoners, and they'll serve to fill all the crosses between Jerusalem and Jericho. . . . I bring a letter to thee from Pilate. *(He hands Joseph a letter.)* If thou wouldst replace the camels thou hast lost, Master, at little cost—

JOSEPH: Stolen camels are cheap to-day in Moab, and the stealing of another convoy will cheapen them still further. . . .

(Reading his letter.) I must write to Pilate at once.

(Joseph goes out hurriedly, and Jesus approaches Jedaiah. Esora takes one of the fowls out of her basket and begins to pluck it.)

JESUS (to Jedaiah): The smell of camels hangs around thee and of sheep, and thou comest from the hills over against the Jordan, maybe?

JEDAIAH: We come up from Moab with camels and sheep.

JESUS: What is thy dog's name?

JEDAIAH: Take thine eyes off my dog, for the Thracian breed reckes little of the stranger's eye or hand. Take thine eyes from that dog, and I'll tell thee how one night I lay in sleep so deep that the rain could not stir me out of it, though it flowed about me. But the dog, taking pity on my plight, licked my face till I awoke, and when I had wrung out my cloak he led me to a dry cave.

JESUS: He must have gone in search of a cave as soon as it began to rain, and when he found a dry one came back to fetch thee.

A faithful friend is the Thracian; he loves but once.

JEDAIAH: Thou hast worked with the Thracian breed?

JESUS: Aye, and with the Syrian.

JEDAIAH: Timorous curs, that turn shrieking from a wolf.

JESUS: Anos and Torbitt and Boreth were Thracians. Anos and Torbitt were at home, one with a lame paw, the other with puppies, and I was sleeping in a cave, the flock about me; Boreth was away upon his rounds. It was then that two robbers crept up through the flock, one with a dagger to plunge into me, but I had time to catch his wrist and to whistle, and in a few seconds Boreth was at his throat, biting his neck and shoulders; and then leaving the robber disabled, he crept round and round in the darkness, biting the robber's mate all the time. And then pursuing the two he worried them up the valley till his heart misgave him and he returned to me, thinking it would not be safe to leave me alone any longer.

JEDAIAH: Over what hills didst thou lead thy flock?

JESUS: The hills over against Jericho, sometimes taking the flock into the valley of the Jordan and sometimes leading it round by

the source where the brook Kerith rises out of the earth and tumbles over the rocks.

JEDAIAH: And who was thy master?

JESUS: I belonged to the Essenes.

JEDAIAH: To those that live in a cavern above the brook Kerith, hard by Elijah's cave?

JESUS: Having charge of the flock I lived on the hills, going but seldom to the cavern where the Essenes assemble. My flock was my single thought until . . . I remember no more.

JEDAIAH: Brother Amos leads the flock, and him I have seen on the hills for a couple of years.

JESUS: Does he do well with the flock?

JEDAIAH: None too well. He has fallen in with wolves, and scab.

JESUS: The tidings sorrow me, for the yoes I gave over had good teeth, the rams speeded well, there was little scab.

JEDAIAH: The day that I lost my camels I had talk with him, and he told me that he would be well pleased to give up his flock to another, for he is doing no good with it. And it would please Hazael, the President, to give over the flock to another, for it wastes month by month. Being an Essene, thou canst not have forgotten Hazael?

JESUS: I have not forgotten him.

JEDAIAH: As we turn aside and pass the sundered rocks that mark the shoulder of the hill, we often come into view of Hazael sitting on his balcony overhanging the gorge. It is said that he sits waiting always the coming of a brother lost to him long ago.

(Jesus turns suddenly from Jedaiah.)

JESUS: Oh, my God, hide the past from me, and whatever it may have been, let it be past. *(He comes down to Esora, as if seeking her help to save him from further revelation, and then like one belated he returns to Jedaiah.)* I would hear how my poor sheep fare, poor starvelings that Brother Amos leads any whither, no whither.

ESORA *(to Jedaiah)*: Lead him away, and under the olive trees talk to him of Kerith and the Essenes.

(Enter Joseph. Jesus and Jedaiah go up the stage. Joseph goes to Esora.)

JOSEPH: This letter bids me to the Praetorium. Pilate would speak with me about the rise of the price of bread in Jerusalem.

and perchance about the loss of my camels. Or he may say to me: I gave thee a body thinking it was dead, but it was a living man; now, where is he? He will ask me kindly, for he trusts me, but what answer shall I make to him?

ESORA: There is but one answer—that Jesus is not in Jerusalem.

JOSEPH: Should I lie to Pilate and Zealots come here by night and seek Jesus, he will not trust me again.

ESORA: I would not have thee lie to Pilate. No. Then indeed we should perish, all of us. I would have thee tell the truth to Pilate, that Jesus is not in Jerusalem. He must go hence at once, and methinks that God has sent Jedaiah to take him away from us.

JOSEPH: Jedaiah is to be trusted, but not with this secret.

ESORA: He need know nothing. They babble together of sheep and Thracian dogs, and Jesus has begun to remember the Essenes of the brook Kerith.

(Jesus and Jedaiah come down the stage.)

JOSEPH: Of what are ye talking together so eagerly?

JEDAIAH: Of flocks and pastures and the Essenes.

JESUS: Joseph, I would return to my brethren.

JOSEPH *(to Jedaiah)*: Thou'lt return to Moab to keep watch over the camels that remain to us, taking Jesus with thee, who would return to his brethren.

JEDAIAH: If we start now we shall be at the brook before daybreak.

JOSEPH: See that thy asses are ready.

(Exit Jedaiah.)

JESUS: I shall see thee again, Joseph, at the brook Kerith. The brethren show little favour to a truant brother, but Hazael will plead for me.

JOSEPH: In a week, Jesus, I shall be at the brook Kerith. My greetings to Hazael and the brethren, for I knew them before the Essenes divided, when all were collected in the cenoby on the thither side of Jordan.

(Jesus takes farewell of Joseph and Esora and goes out.)

I would have ridden with Jesus to the brook Kerith, but I dare not leave Jedaiah here to babble of one Jesus whom he met in Joseph of Arimathea's garden. A Zealot would cry: From Nazareth? and he would answer: No, from the brook Kerith; and then a search would begin. Jedaiah will be safe in Moab,

and I'll take care that he remains in Moab till Jesus of Nazareth is forgotten.

ESORA: Thou'st saved his life, Master, and our own lives are safe from the moment he reaches Kerith. (*Joseph and Esora stand looking at each other for a moment.*) I must be thinking now of the lamb in my basket.

JOSEPH: We shall sit down to meat without him, and to-morrow will be empty of his dear presence.

ESORA: But in a week's time thou'lt see him, Master.

JOSEPH: Mayhap, mayhap, if he reaches Kerith in safety, and suspicion is diverted from me for having carried him hither from the tomb. (*The servant enters to carry away the bundle of faggots that Jesus has collected, but Joseph repels him.*) I will carry the faggots myself. (*Joseph picks up the bundle and goes out, followed by Esora with her basket.*)

CURTAIN

ACT I

Twenty years later. Evening. The main hall of the cenoby of the Essenes, a rude, barn-like structure opening on to a balcony, which is visible; doors lead from the hall to the lecture-room and the cells. Enter Jesus with Jacob, a young shepherd. As they advance down the cave voices are heard.

JESUS: Speak in hushed voice, Jacob; Mathias is discoursing.

JACOB: He is the brother who interprets the Scriptures, showing the meaning hidden in the stories, they being certainly but parables, for Adam and Eve could not have been so foolish as to hide from God in a garden; nobody can hide from God.

JESUS: But whence came this knowledge of Mathias's science, Jacob? Who has been talking?

JACOB: Saddoc, whom I met the day I came with a message to thee from Hazael. He was sitting on the cliff's edge looking into the gulf, muttering: Heresies! heresies! heresies!

JESUS: Saddoc and Mathias are of different minds about the garden of Eden, our first parents, and many other things. Mathias is hard to understand and a great trouble to Saddoc.

JACOB: And will be to thee, Master, in this cavern, for it will breed a great longing in thee for the sky and the hills and all that belong to these: the flock running merrily, following after the sound of the pipe, the sunny mornings on the hillsides, and the oak wood where we sat so often resting through the heats of midday. And to escape, Master, the drone coming from under yon door thou'lt be thinking of Eliab, who often soothed thee with sweet airs on the double flute, of Bozrah, who ran his fingers over the strings of his harp to recall thee to us from the depths of the wood. But it was in answer, methinks, to Havilah's pipe that thou wouldst come to the rugged oak; he had a lonely ditty that fetched thee. Ah, Master, thou canst not forget, so why leave us?

JESUS: Thou'rt right, Jacob; I have lived too long on the hills to forget them. I shall not seek to forget, and not many days will pass without my coming to the hills to hearken to the sound of thy pipe. Mine I make over to thee.

JACOB: Thou must keep thy pipe, Master, to warn me of thy coming, and when I hear it I shall leap to my feet as the goat leaps at the sight of a quickening bough.

JESUS: I have taught thee much of my craft.

JACOB: But Hazael will put questions to me that I cannot answer.

JESUS: Hazael is without wit for sheep and goats.

JACOB: Hazael will say to thee: Jesus, thou must remain our shepherd till next lambing season is over; and if he says that he will say well.

JESUS: It is not long since he said to me: Jesus, there is grey in thy beard; how old art thou? And when I answered: Fifty-three, his head sank on his breast and he muttered: And I heard thee always spoken of as the boy Jesus. And now he often speaks to me of my return from the hills.

JACOB: He would like to have thee with him, but he must think of the flock, and he will ask if the dogs will follow me.

JESUS: Thema takes meat from thee and after two days' fast Gorbatha will come, and when they have run down a wolf or a jackal for thee, they'll know thee as their master. Take heed of thy flock; do well the work that God has given thee to do, remembering always that though the distance be great from bad pasture to good, the journey from the bad to the good will profit thee, though the flock be weary before they attain it; but how-

ever weary, if the grass be good they will fall to nibbling. And now, Jacob, before we part, remember that when the lambs are folded with the yoes thou'lt put into their jaws a stick to keep them from sucking; and keep thine eye upon the lamb I pointed out to thee, for he will come into a fine, broad-shouldered ram, strong across the loins and straight on his legs, the sort to get lambs that will do well on these hills; and thou'lt be wise to leave him for another hundred days on his dam. Shear him, for it will give him strength to take some wool from him, but take it not from his back, for he'll want the wool there to protect him from the sun. All the first year he will skip about the yoes and jump upon them, but it will be only play, for his time is not yet come. In two more years he will be at his height, serving ten yoes a day; but keep him not overlong, for thou must always have some new rams preparing, else the flock will decline. The ram that I chose for thy lesson to-night is old and must soon be replaced; he was a good ram in his time; but the white ram that came at my call is the best that I have seen this many a year. The white ram is stronger than the black, though the black yoe will turn from him and seek a ram of her own colour. I have known a white ram so ardent for a black yoe that he fought the black ram till their skulls cracked.

JACOB: But Master—

(The door of the lecture-room opens and Brothers Manahem and Saddoc bear out Hazael, their President, who has fainted. The Essenes are clad in long white garments.)

MANAHEM *(as they cross the stage to the balcony)*: As soon as we get him into the air he will return to himself.

SADDOC: A little water!

(Exit Jesus. He returns with water; he motions the others aside and bathes Hazael's temples.)

HAZAE: The heat overcame me. But I shall soon be well, and then I'll bid you bear me back to hear—

JESUS: Thou'lt do better to rest in the air of this balcony, hearken-
ing to the brook that never wearies.

HAZAE: It was not the length of Mathias's discourse, nor his eloquence, that caused my senses to swoon away, but my age, which will not permit me to listen long. I would be with Jesus, and I would that ye, Saddoc and Manahem, return to the lecture-room at once, else our brother will think his discourse has

failed. Hasten, lest ye miss any of his arguments. Jesus is here to give the attendance I require. (*The Essenes are about to raise a protest, but at a sign from Hazael they obey.*)

HAZAEI: Who is this standing by thee, Jesus? My eyes are not so good as they were. Not one of the brethren, for if he wore a white robe I should see it.

JESUS: Jacob: one surer of eye and fleetier of foot than I am. I have brought him this evening to thee to receive thy commands, for to-night I remain with you here.

HAZAEI: So thou biddest the hills farewell to-night?

JESUS: Why not to-night, since I am bringing thee a shepherd that will serve thee as well as I have? Another may claim him whilst winter wears, for his fame is spreading.

HAZAEI: Jacob, thy master speaks well of thee.

JACOB: He speaks too well of me, sir, overlooking my ill luck on the hills over against Caesarea.

JESUS: Whither he went in search of pasture, tidings having reached Kerith that rain had fallen in the west.

JACOB: Without dogs. Let Hazael know that my dogs were taken the night before by panthers.

JESUS: There is nothing so palatable to a panther as a dog; he will risk his life fearlessly for one. And how many wolves were there in the pack that trailed thee from cavern to cavern?

JACOB: Ten or a dozen, and what defence would my poor dogs have been against such a number? It was on the fourth night that I found no cavern where I expected to find one, and lay down in the open with my flock. . . . After the loss of the flock I wandered, an outcast, living on the scraps which the shepherds threw me. But they wearied of charity, and I'd be sitting with the lepers by the wayside above Jericho if Jesus had not given his lambs into my charge.

JESUS: Jacob lost faith in himself.

JACOB: I am young, said I to myself, and can wait. Jesus, who knows more than all the other shepherds together, holds me to be no fool. I am young and can wait, and, who knows, Jesus may tell me his cure for the scab, and by serving him I may get a puppy when Thema has a litter.

HAZAEI: Jacob, it is for thee to listen rather than to speak, and since Jesus believes that thou canst replace him, the flock from henceforth is in thy charge. (*Jesus goes up the stage with Jacob.*)

JESUS: Thou'lt come to fetch me in the morning and we'll go to count the sheep together; and take heart, Jacob, for I shall always be by in case of need.

JACOB: Am I to feed the dogs, Master?

JESUS: It will be better for thee to pass them by to-night without notice and to-morrow they'll take food from thee at my bidding, as before. (*Exit Jacob.*)

HAZAEI: I gave Caleb a letter this morning for thee, charging him to search the hills. He found thee quickly.

JESUS: He met Jacob, for whom I was waiting at the source of the brook. After reading thy letter I held my peace to Jacob, and it was not till the last yoe was made clean for the winter that I said to him: I have come to the end of my life on the hills. He was frightened at the thought of leaving me before the lambing time—

HAZAEI: And I, too, am frightened at the thought of leaving thee before the springtime. I shall be sorry to leave thee, Jesus, for our lives have been twisted together, strands of the same rope. But it must be plain to thee that I am growing weaker; month by month, week by week, my strength is ebbing. I am going out; but for what reason should I lament that God has not chosen to retain me for a few months longer, since my life cannot be prolonged for more than a few months? My eighty and odd years have left me with barely strength enough to sit in the doorway looking back on the way I have come. Every day the things of this world grow fainter, and life becomes to me an unreal thing, and myself becomes unreal to those around me; only for thee do I retain anything of my vanished self. So why should I remain? For thy sake, lest thou be lonely here? Well, that is reason enough, and I will bear the burden of life as well as I can for thy sake. A burden it is, and for a reason that thou mayest not divine, for thou art still a young man in my eyes, and, moreover, hast not lived under a roof year after year listening to learned interpretations of the Scriptures. Thou hast not guessed, nor wilt thou ever guess, till age reveals it to thee, that as we grow old we no longer concern ourselves to love God as we used to love him. No one would have thought, not even thou, whose mind is always occupied with God, and who art more conscious of him, perhaps, than any one I have known, no one, I say, not even thou, would have thought that as we approach death our

love of God would grow weaker, but this is so. In great age nothing seems to matter, and it is this indifference that I wish to escape from. Thou goest forth in the morning to lead thy flock in search of pasture, and God is nearer to us in the wilderness than he is among men.

JESUS: Dost thou mean that under this roof I, too, may cease to love God?

HAZAEI: Not cease to love God.

JESUS: Thou wouldst warn me that God is only loved on the hills under the sky.

HAZAEI: I am too weak to choose my thoughts or words, and many things pass out of my mind. Had I remembered I shouldn't have spoken.

JESUS: But why not speak, Father, so that I may be prepared in a measure for what may befall me?

HAZAEI: Life never comes twice in the same way and I know not what may befall thee; but the sky, Jesus, will always be before thine eyes and the green fields under thy feet, even whilst listening to Mathias.

JESUS: But thou didst live once under the sky.

HAZAEI: Not long enough. But the love of God was ardent in me when I walked by day and night, sleeping under the stars, seeking young men who could give up their lives to the love of God and bringing them back hither into the fold of the Essenes. But, Jesus, why this grief? Because I am going from thee? But, dear friend, to come and go is the law of life, and it may be that I shall be with thee longer than thou thinkest for; eighty and odd years may be lengthened into ninety; the patriarchs lived till a hundred and more years, and we believe that the soul outlives the body. Out of the chrysalis we escape from our corruptible bodies, and the beautiful butterfly flutters Godward. Grieve for me a little when I am gone, but grieve not before I go, for I would see thy face always happy, as I remember it those years long ago in Nazareth. Jesus, Jesus, thou shouldst not weep like this! None should weep but for sin, and thy life is known to me from the day in Nazareth when we sat in the street together to the day that thou wentest to the Jordan to get baptism from John.

JESUS: But a year of my life is unknown to thee, Hazael.

HAZAEI: We will not speak of it, nor of thy transgression of our

rules, atoned for on the hills. Since God has forgiven thee, why should we be laggards in forgiveness? Thy voice calms the possessed.

JESUS: I pray thee, say not another word, Hazael, for none is less worthy than I. The greatest sinner amongst us is sitting by thee, one that has not dared to tell his secret to thee. . . . The memory of my sin has fed upon me and grown stronger, becoming a devil within me, but till now I have lacked courage to come to thee and ask thee to cast it out; to none may I tell it but thee, for none else would understand it.

HAZAEI: I am listening, Jesus.

(The door of the lecture-room opens and the Essenes come out singing:)

In the Lord put I my trust:
How say ye to my soul, Flee
As a bird to your mountain?
For, lo, the wicked bend their
Bow, they make ready their arrow
Upon the string, that they may privily
Shoot at the upright in heart.
If the foundations be destroyed, what
Can the righteous do?
For the righteous Lord loveth
Righteousness; his countenance
Doth behold the upright.

JESUS: These words of the Psalmist were meant for me, and now that the brethren are here I may not speak. But to-morrow—

HAZAEI: There may be no to-morrow for us.

JESUS: Even so, I cannot speak to-night. It is as though I were bidden to withhold my secret till to-morrow. We know not why we speak or why we are silent, but silence has been put upon me.

HAZAEI: Be it so. *(To the Essenes.)* Our brother Jesus has given over the charge of our flocks to a young shepherd in whom he trusts, and Jesus sleeps under a roof to-night, the first for many years, for, like us, he is getting older, and the rains and the blasts of last winter have gone into his bones.

SADDOC: All the cells, Father, are filled.

HAZAEI: I know that well, Saddoc. Jesus can sleep here on these

benches; a mattress and a cloak will be enough for him who has slept in caverns or in valleys on stones piled high to keep him above the floods. Manahem will get thee a mattress, Jesus; he knows where to find one. (*Exit Manahem.*) I am strong enough to walk alone, Saddoc. (*Hazael disengages himself from Saddoc's arm and walks with the Essenes towards his cell, joining them in the psalm:*)

All the powers of the Lord
Bless ye the Lord; praise and
Exalt him above all for ever.

(*Exit Hazael and the Essenes. Saddoc remains with Jesus.*)

SADDOC: The brethren are weary of hearing Mathias prove that the Scriptures are but allegories, and for a long time have been talking of thee, saying: He'll come back with stories of the robbers he has met and the wolves and the bears that he has escaped from. True enough, there are some that would have thee stay on the hills, for Jacob, not being one of us, will claim one lamb out of every twenty. High wages, high wages! And these he may send to the Temple for burnt offerings, the which, as thou knowest, is forbidden by our laws. I have much more to tell, but Manahem comes with a mattress for thee.

(*Enter Manahem carrying a mattress.*)

MANAHEM: Wilt thou sleep, Jesus, within the cavern or on the balcony under the sky?

JESUS: On the balcony, dear brethren.

SADDOC (*helping Manahem to lay the mattress on the balcony*):

On this bench he will lie comfortably under a covering, for though the evenings are still warm, the nights are chilly. Fetch a warm covering, Manahem. (*Exit Manahem. Saddoc approaches Jesus.*) Since Mathias came we have never had an easy day with our own thoughts. What dost thou think he was saying when we returned to the lecture-room?

JESUS: I cannot guess the mind of Mathias, Saddoc.

SADDOC: That there are two beings in man, one that has prudence and the other that exerts it, and he likens these two principles to a carbuncle and an emerald. I said to myself: Jesus shall decide between us—

(*Enter Manahem with a quilt.*)

MANAHEM: The warmest I could find, perhaps too warm.

JESUS (*feeling the quilt*): My thanks, brethren, my thanks. (*He passes to the further end of the balcony and leans over the balustrade.*) How still the night is, not a sound in it but the murmur of the brook flowing down the gorge to Jordan. . . . Ye have voices of wayfarers sometimes at your door asking for shelter and bread?

SADDOC: The dangers of the path save us from wayfarers, and we sleep from dusk to dusk.

MANAHEM: Only once did a wayfarer attempt to follow the path by night, and he lost his life over the cliffs in the brook. Thyself would miss the path, shepherd though thou art.

JESUS: We shall have one to-night, vagrant or prophet. Come, Manahem, and tell me if thine eyes discern not a man in the path yonder. He comes out of the shadow of the overhanging rock.

MANAHEM: I see none.

JESUS: Look again, Manahem.

SADDOC: Our shepherd's eyes are better than ours. A man is on the path, trying to follow it; but if he be a man of flesh and blood like ourselves, he will topple.

MANAHEM: He has not yet gone over into the brook, but keeps the path as if he knew it. He is maybe one of our dissident brothers come up from Jordan.

SADDOC: Now he is crossing the bridge, and now he begins the ascent. Let us pray that he may miss the path through the terraces.

JESUS: But thou wouldst not have him miss it, Saddoc? He shall have my mattress.

SADDOC: If not an evil spirit, of a certainty he is coming to ask for shelter for the night; and if not a demon, he may be a prophet or a robber; for once more the hills are filled with robbers.

JESUS: Or it may be the preacher of whom Jacob spoke to me this evening; he came up from Jordan with a story of a preacher that the multitude would not listen to and sought to drown in the river; and he told me how the rabble had followed the man over the hills with the intent to kill him.

MANAHEM: Some great and terrible heresy he must be preaching to stir them like that. Did Jacob bring news of his escape or death?

JESUS: Jacob thought the prophet escaped into a cave, for he saw the crowd dispersing, going home like dogs from a hunt when they have lost their quarry.

SADDOC: A robber is at our door, for sure. He escaped the crowd and has been lying in hiding in a cave. Only a robber who knew the hills could have kept the path. . . . Now he sees us. He is no shepherd, but a robber. (*They wait a few moments, and the knocking they expect comes at the door.*) Open not the door, Jesus! They are Sicarii who kill men in the daytime, mingling themselves among the multitude with daggers hidden in their garments, their mission being to stab those that disobey the law in any fraction. We're Essenes, and may not send blood offerings to the Temple. Open not the door. Sicarii or Zealots travel in search of heretics through the cities of Samaria and Judea. Open not the door! Men are for ever fooled, and will never cease to open their doors to those who stand in need of meat and drink. It will be safer, Jesus, to bid him away. Tell him rather that we'll let down a basket of meat and drink from the balcony to him.

JESUS: Art thou, Manahem, for turning this man from the door or letting him in?

MANAHEM: There is no need to be frightened; he is but a wanderer, Saddoc.

SADDOC: A wanderer he cannot be, for he has followed the path through the darkness, a thing we could not do. Open not the door, I tell thee, or else we all hang on crosses above the hills tomorrow. (*He goes to the door and listens.*)

MANAHEM: But, Saddoc, by our law we may not refuse bed and board to the poor.

JESUS: If we do not open, he will leave our door, and that will be a greater misfortune than any that he may bring us. Hearken, Saddoc!

SADDOC (*to Manahem*): He speaks fair enough; but we may plead that after sunset in the times we live in—

JESUS: But, Manahem, art thou with me or with Saddoc? We know that there is but one man, and we are more than a match for one. Put a sword in Saddoc's hand.

SADDOC: No, Manahem! for I should feel like a fool with a sword in my hand. Since thou sayest there is but one man and we are three, it might be unlucky to turn him from our doors.

JESUS: May I then open to him?

(Jesus unbars the door and Paul staggers in, bald-headed, his turban having fallen in his flight. He is a powerful man of medium height, with broad shoulders, piercing black eyes, shaggy eyebrows, and a hooked nose; a black beard covers the lower part of his face. He stands like a hunted animal, breathing hard, looking from one to the other.)

PAUL: May I rest a little while? If so, give me a drink before I sleep. No food, but drink. Why do ye not answer? Do ye fear me, mistaking me for a robber? Or have I wandered among robbers? Where am I? *(To Jesus.)* Hearken! I am but a wayfarer, and thou'rt a shepherd of the hills, I know thee by thy garb; thou'lt not refuse me shelter.

JESUS *(to Saddoc and Manahem)*: He shall have the mattress I was to sleep upon. *(To Paul.)* Thou shalt have food and a coverlet.

PAUL: No food, but a drink of water.

SADDOC: There is some yoes' milk on the shelf, Manahem.

(Manahem fetches the milk, which Paul drinks greedily.)

JESUS: Thou must be footsore. I'll get thee a linen garment so that thou mayest sleep more comfortable; sleep will come easier in a fresh garment, and I'll bathe thy feet before sleep.

(Exit Jesus.)

PAUL: But to whose dwelling have I come? A shepherd told me the Essenes lived among the rocks. Am I among them? He told me to keep close to the cliff's edge or I should topple over.

MANAHEM: We watched thee.

SADDOC *(whispering to Manahem)*: It will be well to ask him his name and whence he comes.

MANAHEM *(to Paul)*: The shepherd told thee that we were Essenes, and it remains for thee to tell us whom we entertain.

PAUL: I am Paul of Tarsus, a prisoner of the Romans—

SADDOC: A prisoner of the Romans! Then indeed we are lost; a prisoner of the Romans with soldiers perhaps at thy heels! A prisoner fled from Roman justice may not lodge here. . . . Let us put him beyond our doors. Manahem, aid me.

(Saddoc tries to drag Paul to his feet. Jesus enters with a basin of water and a garment.)

JESUS: Have a care, Saddoc, and give thy thought to our law that no traveller shall be turned away from our doors.

SADDOC: But he tells us he is a prisoner of the Romans!

JESUS: Even so we cannot turn him away to fall into the gorge.

SADDOC: He kept to the path once; why should he not keep to it again?

PAUL (*to Jesus*): These men have small understanding. I am not a criminal fleeing from the Romans, but a Roman citizen escaped from Jewish persecution.

SADDOC: Why then didst thou say that thou'rt a prisoner of the Romans?

PAUL: I am a prisoner of the Romans to escape the Jews of Jerusalem—but of all this I will tell you to-morrow, and do you tell me now of him who followed me along the cliff.

JESUS: We saw no one following thee; thou wast alone.

PAUL: He may have missed me before I turned down the path coming from Jericho. I speak of Timothy, my beloved son in the faith.

SADDOC (*whispering to Manahem*): What strange man is this that we entertain for the night?

PAUL: The Jews will never set free any disciple of mine. Should Timothy have fallen into their hands he is lost to us for ever.

JESUS: We know not of what thou'rt speaking.

PAUL (*rising*): I must make search for Timothy.

JESUS: The moon is setting, and there is no strength in thy legs to keep to the path. Thy friend is on his way to Caesarea, and in the darkness of the hills—

PAUL: I should seek him in vain.

(*Jesus unties Paul's sandals and bathes his feet.*)

We came from Caesarea to Jericho and by leave of the noble Festus, to whom we must return quickly, for he sends us to Rome in four days from now.

SADDOC: Thou hast nothing to fear from us. We would not keep thee over thy time, but would hear willingly on what errand ye came hither.

PAUL: We came to preach the Lord Jesus who was raised from the dead, but the people would not listen.

MANAHEM: Why would they not listen? 'Tis not every day one hears tales like that.

PAUL: And, stirred up by the Jews, they sought to capture us, but we escaped into the hills and hid in a cave to which the spirit of the Lord directed us.

MANAHEM (*whispering to Saddoc*): Hark! an angel pointed out a cave to him!

SADDOC: Then he must be a good man; but we know not if he speaks the truth. We have had too many prophets; he is another of the same tribe, setting men by the ears. (*Jesus relieves Paul of his garment and passes a white robe over his shoulders.*)

JESUS: Thou'lt sleep easier in it.

PAUL: They would have done well to hearken to me, for have I not testified in many synagogues to the truth of the vision on the road to Damascus, witnessed by many, and the need of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and founded churches in a hundred cities. (*Consciousness passes from Paul. He falls asleep in the arms of Jesus and Saddoc.*)

SADDOC: Of what is he telling us?

JESUS: He has fallen asleep. Help me to lift him on to the bed on the balcony.

(*Jesus and Saddoc carry Paul to the balcony and lay him on one of the wide benches. They cover him with the quilt. Jesus lies down beside him. Saddoc returns to Manahem.*)

MANAHEM: He speaks of the Lord Jesus as if all the world knew him.

SADDOC: And all the world should know him if he were raised from the dead. (*They move a little nearer to Paul and Jesus.*) One would hardly know him from stone.

MANAHEM: He'll sleep long after we are about, and Mathias will grimace and sneer, and scorn us, for we shall not be able to answer the hard questions that he'll put to us.

SADDOC: He has a grudge against me, and I will not abide his questions. But it would be shameful to awaken our guest: and if we did, he is too weary to answer me. (*They go up the stage.*)

MANAHEM: Jesus, too, is asleep. We must leave them. But why did he speak of the Gentiles?

SADDOC: Has it not been said that all the world will be united under one God—Iaveh?

MANAHEM: Mathias will explain.

SADDOC: Mathias! Mathias! Mathias! (*Exit Manahem and Saddoc.*)

CURTAIN

To be concluded

POEM

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

By the road to the contagious hospital
under the surge of the blue
mottled clouds driven from the
northeast—cold wind. Beyond, the
waste of broad, muddy fields
brown with dried weeds, standing and fallen

patches of standing water
the scattering of tall trees

All along the road the reddish
purplish, forked, upstanding, twiggy
stuff of bushes and small trees
with dead, brown leaves under them
leafless vines—

Lifeless in appearance, sluggish
dazed spring approaches—

They enter the new world naked,
cold, uncertain of all
save that they enter. All about them
the cold, familiar wind—

Now the grass, to-morrow
the stiff curl of wild-carrot leaf

One by one objects are defined—
It quickens: clarity, outline of leaf

But now the stark dignity of
entrance—Still, the profound change
has come upon them; rooted, they
grip down and begin to awaken



A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE



A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE

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THE HERETIC OF SOANA

BY GERHART HAUPTMANN

Translated from the German by Bayard Quincy Morgan

III

THE descent to Soana brought to Francesco a meditative disenchantment, as to one who has drunk the final dregs from the cup of intoxication. The Scarabota family had gone away after the mass: brother, sister, and daughter had gratefully kissed the young priest's hand in parting.

Now, as he descended farther and farther into the depths, he likewise grew more and more suspicious of the state of mind in which he had celebrated the mass up yonder. The peak of St Agatha too had surely been in former times a place of pagan worship; and what had taken hold of him up there, seemingly with the rushing sound of the Holy Ghost, was perhaps the demoniacal work of that dethroned theocracy which Jesus Christ had deposed, but whose pernicious power was still tolerated by the creator and ruler of the world. Arriving at Soana and his parsonage, the priest had been wholly possessed by the consciousness of having committed a grievous sin; and his anxieties on this account became so severe that even before his noon meal he entered the church, which stood wall to wall with his dwelling, in order to commit himself in ardent prayers to the highest Mediator, and perhaps be cleansed by His grace. In a feeling of pure helplessness he begged God not to deliver him over to the assaults of the demons.

Francesco's prayers had no longer their former clearness and conciseness. He prayed for things which were mutually exclusive. At times he himself fell into doubt as to whether the stream of passion which carried his prayers derived from Heaven or from some other source. That is, he did not exactly know whether he was not actually beseeching Heaven for a hellish benefit. The fact that he included the two Scarabotas in his prayer might have its source in Christian compassion and his pastoral responsibility,

but was it just the same thing when he prayed to Heaven, with a fervour that brought scalding tears, for the deliverance of Agata?

At present he could give an affirmative answer to this question; for the clear stirring of his most powerful instinct, which he had felt on seeing the girl again, had passed over into a dreamy enthusiasm for something infinitely pure. This transformation was the reason why Francesco did not perceive that that fruit of a mortal sin was coming to take the place of Mary, the Mother of God, and was becoming for his prayers and thoughts, one might say, the incarnation of the Madonna. On the first of May there began in the church of Soana, as everywhere, a special worship of Mary, whose observance put to sleep still more notably the watchfulness of the young priest. Always, day in, day out, at about the time of the evening twilight, he delivered a little discourse, principally to the women and daughters of Soana, which had for its subject the virtues of the Blessed Virgin. Before and afterward the nave of the church resounded with songs of praise in the honour of Mary, which rang out through the open door into the springtime. And with the delicious old airs, so beautiful in both text and music, there mingled from without the cheerful chirping of sparrows, and from the near-by, humid gorges the sweetest plaint of the nightingale. At such moments Francesco, while apparently serving Mary, was wholly given over to the service of his idol.

Had the mothers and daughters of Soana dreamed that in the eyes of the priest they formed a congregation which he was inviting to the church day after day to the glorification of that hated child of sin, or in order to have himself wafted on the devout strains of the songs of Mary-worship up to the tiny pasture clinging far and high up on the crags, he would surely have been stoned; but as it was, it seemed as if the young pastor's piety increased with each day before the wondering eyes of the entire parish. Little by little, old and young, rich and poor, in short everybody from *sindaco* to beggar, from the most faithful to the most indifferent churchgoer, was drawn into the sacred May-madness of Francesco Vela.

Even the long solitary walks which he now frequently took were construed in the young saint's favour. And yet they were only undertaken in the hope that on such an occasion chance might lead Agata across his path. For fearing to betray himself, he had set a week's interval before the next special service for the Scarabota family; and this now seemed unbearable to him.

Nature was still speaking to him in that unconcealed manner which he had first become aware of on the road to St Agatha, on the height of the little sanctuary. Every grass-blade, every flower, every tree, every vine and ivy-leaf were merely single words of a speech which issued forth from the primeval source of all being, and which even in the deepest silence spoke with a titanic roar. Never had any music so permeated his entire being, and, as he thought, so filled it with the Holy Ghost.

The day of the divine service for the poor outlawed mountain-herders had finally arrived again. Even in the morning, when Francesco got up, it resembled no other among all those he had ever experienced. Thus in the life of every privileged man, days spring up unexpected and unbidden, like a blinding revelation. On this morning the youth had no desire to be either a saint or an archangel or even a god. Nay, he was rather seized with a faint fear that saints, archangels, and gods might be made his foes by envy: for on this morning he felt himself exalted above saints, angels, and gods. But on the summit of St Agatha a disappointment was awaiting him. His idol that bore the name of the saint had not come to the church with the others. When questioned by the blanching priest, the rude animal father only produced rude animal sounds; whereas his wife, who was at the same time his sister, excused her daughter on the grounds of household work. Hereupon the holy office was performed by Francesco in so listless a manner that at the end of the mass he hardly knew whether it had already begun. Inwardly he experienced the torments of Hell; indeed such states of mind as, comparable to a real fall from Heaven to Hell, made of him a poor damned soul.

After he had dismissed at once both the ministrants and the two Scarabotas, he descended at random one side of the steep peak, still utterly disconcerted, without being conscious of any goal, still less of any danger. Again he heard the cries of nuptially circling ospreys. But they sounded to him like mockery poured out upon him from the deceptively gleaming ether. In the rubble of a dry water-course he slipped, panting and leaping, while he whimpered confused prayers and curses. He felt torments of jealousy. Although nothing had happened save that the sinner Agata had been detained by something or other on the alp of Soana, it seemed a settled thing to the priest that she had a lover, and was spending the time stolen from church in his villainous arms. While her ab-

sence brought home to his consciousness all of a sudden the immensity of his dependence, he felt by turns fear, consternation, and rage, the impulse to punish her and to beg her for deliverance from his distress—that is, for the return of his love.

With torn and dusty cassock, flayed hands, and scratched face, Francesco arrived after some hours of wild and aimless clambering up and down gorges, through thickets of broom, across rushing mountain-waters, at a part of Generoso where herd-bells greeted his ear. He was not in doubt for a moment as to the place he had thus reached. He looked down upon abandoned Soana, upon his church, which was clearly to be seen in the bright sun, and recognized the throng that was now streaming in vain toward the sanctuary.

Something like a restoration of consciousness was just about to come over the young pastor, when a fragrant smoke, carried by the fresh mountain air, ascended into his nostrils. Involuntarily looking about him with searching glance, he beheld not very far from him the seated figure of a man who seemed to be tending a little fire, beside which a tin vessel, probably filled with *minestra* was steaming. The seated person did not see the priest, for he had his back turned to him.

Francesco's heart beat violently. It was not because he had climbed so furiously up and down the gorges, but for reasons which derived partly from the strangeness of his situation, partly from the peculiar impression which the proximity of the man by the fire produced on him. This brown neck, this curly, yellowish-white hair, the youthfully vigorous physique which one divined beneath the shabby covering, the noticeably free and self-sufficient behaviour of the mountaineer—all this had an immediate deeper meaning to Francesco: his vague morbid jealousy flared up still more torturingly than before.

Francesco walked up to the fire. He could not have hidden successfully anyway; and he was attracted moreover by irresistible forces. The mountaineer turned around, revealing a strong youthful face the like of which the priest had never seen before. Springing up, he stared at Francesco as he approached.

Since the object he was carving was a sling, it was now clear to Francesco that he had to do with a young herdsman. He was tending the brown-and-black spotted cattle which were visible here and there, but for the most part were far off and hidden, climbing about among boulders and brush, and betrayed only by the tinkle

of the bells which the bull and some of the cows wore on their necks. He was a Christian: and what else should he have been among all the mountain-chapels and the images of the Madonna in this region? But he also seemed to be a very particularly devoted son of the Holy Church; for, recognizing the garb of the priest at once, he kissed Francesco's hand with timid fervour and humility.

To begin a conversation with this child of nature involved considerable difficulties. To be alone with the man of the church seemed to embarrass him. Resting on his knees, he would blow into the fire for a time. Then he would throw on twigs, and lift the lid of the kettle, speaking occasionally in an incomprehensible dialect. Then suddenly he uttered a mighty shout, which echoed and re-echoed from the rock-bastions of Generoso.

Scarcely had this echo died away when something was heard approaching with loud shrieks and laughter. There were various voices, the voices of children, among which the voice of a woman could be distinguished, alternately laughing and calling for help. At the sound of this voice Francesco felt his arms and feet grow numb; and at the same time it seemed to him as if a power were making itself known, which, like the one that had caused his birth, contained the true and veritable secret of life. Francesco was flaming like the burning bush of the Lord, but outwardly he gave no sign. He felt an unfamiliar freedom and at the same time a captivity as sweet as it was hopeless.

In the meantime the laughter-choked cries for help had been coming nearer, until at the turn of a precipitous path a bucolic picture became visible. Snorting and rebellious, the same spotted goat that had pestered the priest Francesco on his first visit to the mountain pasture was leading a little bacchantic procession, and, pursued by shouting children, was bearing astride his back the only bacchante of the troop, a beautiful girl whom Francesco thought he was seeing for the first time. She had fast hold of the twisted horns of the goat, but however strongly she leaned backwards, drawing the neck of the animal with her, she was still unable either to force it to stand still or to slide off its back. Some bit of fun, which she might perhaps have undertaken to please the children, had got the girl into this helpless situation; she was not really sitting, but touched the ground with her bare feet on either side, and yet could not get free of the unruly, fiery buck without taking a fall. Her hair had come down, and the straps of her coarse shirt

had slipped from her shoulders so that one breast was visible; and the short skirts of the shepherdess, which at all times hardly reached to her calf, were now less than adequate to cover her rounded knees.

It took some little time before the priest became aware who the bacchante really was. The shrieks of the girl, her laughter, her involuntarily wild gestures, her loosened and flying hair, the open mouth, the spasmodically heaving and panting breast, had changed her appearance entirely. A rosy glow overspread her face; pleasure and fear were mingled with a bashfulness which found droll and pretty expression when one of her hands would dart like a flash from the horn of her mount to the dangerously disarranged hem of her dress.

Francesco was held spellbound by the picture. It seemed to him beautiful in a way which did not suggest the remotest resemblance to a witches' ride. On the other hand, his impressions of the ancients were revived. He thought of the marble sarcophagus which stood on the village square of Soana, continually pouring out clear mountain-water; he recalled how he had recently studied the sculpture on this. Was it not as if that living marble world of the wreath-crowned wine-god, the dancing satyrs, the panther-drawn triumphal chariot, the female flutists and bacchantes, had hidden itself in the stony wastes of Generoso, and as if suddenly one of the god-inspired women, cut off from the frenzied mountain-worship of the maenads, had surprised them by appearing in present-day life?

If Francesco had not recognized Agata at once, the goat had immediately recognized the priest: he dragged his vainly shrieking and resisting burden straight up to him, and by setting his two cleft fore-hoofs without any ceremony in the lap of the priest he brought about the final release of his rider. She slid slowly down from his back.

After the girl had realized that a stranger was present, and when she actually recognized this stranger as Francesco, her laughter and her gaiety came to a very sudden end; and her face, which had till that moment been beaming with pleasure, took on a half-defiant pallor.

"Why did you not come to church to-day?" Francesco asked this question, rising to his feet, in a tone and with an expression on his pale face which one must have interpreted as anger, although it

had for its cause a very different commotion in his soul. Either because he wished to conceal this agitation, or out of embarrassment, even helplessness, or because the shepherd of souls in him really burst into indignation, his anger increased and was displayed in a manner that made the herder look up in disapproval, but that sent the alternate flush and pallor of consternation and shame into the face of the girl.

Every one of his angry words taught Francesco that he was no longer master of himself, but was being forced to seek and to exercise power over Agata at any price. He took possession of her with words. The more he humiliated her, the more loudly resounded within him the harps of bliss. Every pain which his censure inflicted on her aroused a delirium in him: a little more—if only the herder had not been present—and Francesco would have lost in such delirium the last vestige of his self-control, and falling at the girl's feet would have betrayed the true beating of his heart.

Agata had preserved, although she had grown up in that ill-famed home, the innocent mind of a flower. Her blue eyes that resembled the mountain-gentian had never been seen in the valley or down by the lake, any more than the gentian itself. The circle of her experience was limited in the extreme. Yet although the priest was for her not really a man at all, but rather a thing between God and man, a kind of strange sorcerer, yet she suddenly divined, and manifested it by an astonished look, what Francesco wished to conceal.

The children had led the billy-goat up over rubble and away. The woodcutter had not felt comfortable in the presence of the priest. He took his pot from the fire and climbed with it very laboriously up to a comrade who was lowering bundles of brushwood on an interminable wire over a precipice into the depths below. At intervals such a dark bundle would crawl with a scraping sound along the rocky bastions, looking much like a brown bear or the shadow of a giant bird. Moreover, it seemed to fly, as the wire was not visible. Finally the herdsman had disappeared from sight with a yodel of such great power that it re-echoed from the battlements and bastions of Monte Generoso; Agata, as if crushed with penitence, kissed the hem of the priest's garment and then his hand.

Francesco had mechanically made the sign of the cross over the

girl's head, so that his fingers had touched her hair. But now a convulsive trembling went through his arm, as if one element were trying with its utmost strength to keep another element in its power. But the straining, resisting element could not prevent the hand from opening slowly after making the sign of the cross; the palm was brought nearer and nearer to the head of the penitent sinner, and suddenly rested firmly and fully against it.

Francesco cast a cowardly glance about him. He was far from wishing to lie to himself at this stage of affairs, or to use the duties of his holy office to justify him. Yet he was speaking all sorts of words about confession and confirmation. And in his very nearly uncontrolled, straining passion, he feared so greatly the possibility of arousing horror and detestation in case of discovery, that he once more took cowardly refuge behind the mask of the ministry.

"You will come down to my school in Soana, Agata," he said. "There you will learn to read and write. I will teach you a morning and an evening prayer, also God's commandments, and how you can recognize and avoid the seven cardinal sins. Then you will confess to me every week."

But Francesco, who had torn himself free after these words, and had gone down the mountain without looking around, resolved the next morning, after a painfully wakeful night, to go to confession himself. When he revealed, not without disingenuousness, his qualms of conscience to a snuff-taking arch-priest of the neighbouring mountain town, Arogno by name, he was most readily absolved. It was obvious that the Devil was opposing the attempt of the young priest to lead straying souls back into the bosom of the church; especially since for a man, woman was always the most immediate occasion for sinning. Francesco had then breakfasted with the *arciprete* in the parsonage, and many a frank word had been uttered concerning the frequent conflict between secular and churchly interests. Then, while the open window let in soft breezes, sunlight, and birdsongs, Francesco yielded to the delusion that he was carrying away an unburdened heart.

But Francesco had scarcely said farewell to his father-confessor, he had scarcely stridden vigorously away around a turn in the road and put sufficient hilly country, with tree and thicket, between himself and the other . . . and he was already feeling an inexplicable repugnance to the consolation of his colleague and to the entire time that he had spent with him.

That dirty peasant, whose worn cassock and sweaty underwear disseminated a repulsive odour, whose scurvy head and rude hands, covered with ingrained dirt, proved that soap was an alien thing to him, now seemed to be rather an animal, or an imbecile, than a priest of God. The church teaches that the clergy are consecrated persons, he told himself, who have been endowed through the taking of vows with supernatural dignity and power, so that even angels bow down before them. This man could only be designated as a travesty on all that. What a disgrace to see the priestly supremacy laid into such clownish hands! since even God is actually subject to such supremacy, and is irresistibly forced by the words "*hoc est enim meum corpus*" to descend upon the altar in the Mass.

The day had come on which Francesco was expecting in his parsonage for the first time the sinner from the alp of Soana.

Shortly before the peal of the noon bell a murmur of voices arose on the village square, which had till now lain quietly in the sunlight, its chestnut-tops covered with the shoots of Maytime. A crowd of people was approaching. One heard the sound of calmer male voices which seemed to be protesting. But an irresistible stream of women's words, cries, curses, and protests all at once far out-swelled them. Then an ominous stillness followed. Suddenly there came to the ear of the priest dull sounds, the cause of which was incomprehensible for the first moment. It was Maytime, and yet it sounded as when in the fall a chestnut-tree, feeling the force of a gust of wind, shakes down tons of fruit at a time. The hard chestnuts burst like drum-beats as they fall on the ground.

Francesco leaned out of the window.

He saw with horror what was taking place on the *piazza*. He was so frightened, indeed so filled with consternation, that he was first brought to his senses by the shrill, piercing peal of the confessional bell, which was being pulled at with desperate persistence. And already he had run into the church and out in front of the door, and had snatched the confessant—it was Agata—away from the bell-pull and into the church. Then he stepped out before the portal.

So much was clear: the entrance of the outlawed girl into the village had been noticed, and the people had done what they usually did in that case. They had tried to drive her away from the haunts of men with stones, as one would have done with any

mangy cur or a wolf. Soon children and mothers of children had assembled and chased the ostracized, curse-laden being, undisturbed by the beautiful girlish figure; they felt that their stones were aimed at a dangerous animal, a monster that was spreading pestilence and destruction. At the same time Agata, certain of the priest's protection, had not let herself be swerved from her purpose. So the resolute girl, pursued and hunted, had arrived before the door of the church, which was even now struck by some stones thrown by childish hands.

The priest had no need of reproving words to bring his excited parishioners to their senses: they scattered and fled as soon as they saw him.

In the church Francesco had motioned to the panting, silent fugitive to follow him into the parsonage. He too was excited, and so the two heard each other breathing fitfully. The housekeeper was standing upon a narrow little staircase of the parsonage, between whitewashed walls; she was horrified, but already somewhat reassured, and was ready to receive the hunted creature. One could see that she was willing to help in any way that might be needed. When she saw the old woman Agata seemed for the first time to become aware of the humiliating character of her present state. Going from laughter to anger and back from anger to laughter, she uttered violent imprecations; this gave the priest his first opportunity to hear her voice, which seemed to him to ring out full, sonorous, and heroic. She did not know why she was persecuted. She regarded the little town of Soana about as she would a nest of mud-wasps or an ant-hill. Furious and indignant as she was, it did not enter her mind to reflect upon the cause of such dangerous malignance; for after all she had been familiar with this condition from childhood, and took it for a natural one. But one fights off wasps and ants, too. Though it be animals that attack us, we are brought by them to hatred, to fury, to despair, as the case may be, and unburden our hearts, again as the case may be, by threats, tears, or by evidences of the deepest contempt. Agata did the same, and while the housekeeper was twitching her miserable rags into place, she herself was putting up the astonishing profusion of her rust or ochre-coloured hair, which had come down during her swift run.

At this moment young Francesco suffered as never before under the strain of his passion. The nearness of the woman who had

ripened to maturity in the mountains like a delicious wild fruit, the intoxicating glow which radiated from her heated body, the circumstance that the confines of his own dwelling now embraced the hitherto distant and unattainable girl—all this brought him to such a pass that he had to clench his fists and set his teeth, merely to bear up under a condition that at moments would completely darken his brain. When it lightened, there was a monstrous tumult of pictures, thoughts, and feelings in him: landscapes, people, remotest recollections, vivid moments in the past of his family and his profession, united with images of the present. Fleeing from these, as it were, an inescapable future rose up sweet and terrible, to which he knew he was completely subject. Thoughts quivered across this picture-chaos of the soul, innumerable, restless, but powerless. The conscious will, Francesco realized, was dethroned in his soul, and another was reigning which was not to be resisted. With a shudder the youth confessed to himself that he had unconditionally surrendered to it.

Francesco did not know at first what to do. He felt an admonition now to get away from the girl. All sorts of reasons, not all equally pure, moved him to seek out the *Sindaco* at once and to acquaint him with the incident before others could do so. The *Sindaco* listened to him quietly—Francesco had fortunately found him at home—and took the priest's point of view in the matter. It was but Christian and the part of a good Catholic not simply to overlook the deplorable conditions on the Alp, but to take an interest in the ill-famed tribe, ensnared in sin and shame. But as to the villagers and their conduct, he promised to take stern measures against them.

When the young priest had gone, the pretty wife of the *Sindaco*, who had a quiet, silent way of observing things, said:

"This young priest might easily get to be a cardinal, yes even Pope. I think he wears himself out with fasting, prayers, and night-watches. But it is the saints most of all whom the Devil is always pursuing with his hellish arts and with the most deceptive tricks and scheming. May the young man, with God's aid, ever be preserved from them."

Many desirous and many malignant feminine eyes followed Francesco as he walked back to the parsonage at a pace as little accelerated as possible. They knew where he had been, and were resolved to use every effort to keep this pestilence of Soana from being

forced upon them. Girls walking along erect with loads of wood on their heads had met him on the square near the marble sarcophagus, and had, to be sure, saluted him with submissive smiles; but subsequently they looked contemptuously at each other. Francesco strode along as in a fever. He heard the confused warbling of the birds, the swelling and diminishing roar of the eternal waterfall: but it seemed to him as if he did not have his feet on the ground, but were being dragged forward without a rudder into a maelstrom of sounds and images. Suddenly he found himself in the sacristy of his church, then in the nave before the high altar, as he prayed to the Virgin Mary on his knees for help in the tempest of his soul.

But his prayers were not meant to have the effect of freeing him from Agata. Such a wish would have found no nourishment in his heart. They were rather a plea for mercy. The Mother of God should understand, forgive, perhaps approve. Abruptly Francesco interrupted his prayer and tore himself away from the altar as the thought happened to flit into his consciousness that Agata might have gone away. However, he found the girl still there, and Petronilla was keeping her company.

"I have settled everything," said Francesco. "The road to the church and the priest is free to all. Trust in me. What happened to-day will not be repeated." He became resolute and assured, as if he were once more standing on the right path and on good ground. Petronilla was sent to the neighbouring parsonage with an important church document. Unfortunately the errand could not be postponed. And incidentally, the housekeeper might inform the priest of this incident. "If you meet anybody, then tell them," he also said with emphasis, "that Agata has come from the high Alp and is here with me in the parsonage, being instructed by me in the doctrines of our religion, our hallowed faith. Just let them come and prevent it, and draw down upon their heads the punishment of eternal damnation. Just let them cause an uprising before the church to maltreat their fellow-Christian. The stones will not strike her, but me. I shall escort her myself as soon as it grows dark, all the way up to the Alp, if necessary."

When the housekeeper had gone, a lengthy silence ensued. The girl had laid her hands in her lap and was still sitting on the same rickety chair which Petronilla had moved for her up against the whitewashed wall. There was still a quiver in Agata's eyes, and the

injury she had suffered was reflected in flashes of indignation and suppressed rage; but her full-cheeked Madonna-like face had more and more taken on an expression of helplessness, until at last a silent, copious stream bathed her cheeks. Meanwhile Francesco had been looking out of the open window with his back to her. As he let his eyes rove over the gigantic mountain-walls of the valley of Soana, from the calamitous Alp down to the lake-shore; with the eternal murmur of the waterfall the singing of a single melting boyish voice came to him from the luxuriant vine-clad terraces; he hardly dared to think that he now really had in his hands the fulfilment of his desires. Would Agata still be present when he turned around? And if she were present, what would happen when he turned? Must not this turning be decisive for his entire earthly existence, yes and even beyond it? These questions and doubts led the priest to keep the position he had taken as long as possible, in order to judge or at least take counsel once more before the decision was made. It was a matter of seconds, not of minutes: yet in these seconds not only the entire history of his entanglement, from the first visit of Luchino Scarabota on, but his entire conscious life, became immediately present to him. In these seconds a whole tremendous vision of the Last Judgement, with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in the sky, spread out above the topmost ridge of Generoso and terrified with the blare of trumpets. One foot upon Generoso, the other upon a summit across the lake, the scale in his left hand, the naked sword in his right, the Archangel Michael stood terrible and threatening, while the abominable Satan had descended with horns and claws behind the alp of Soana. But wherever the glance of the young priest strayed, there, wringing her hands, stood a black-robed, black-veiled woman, who was no other than his despairing mother.

Francesco shut his eyes and then pressed his two hands against his temples. Then as he slowly turned around he looked for a long time with an expression of horror at the tear-bathed girl, whose purple lips were quivering with pain. Agata was startled. His face was distorted, as if the finger of death had touched it. Speechless, he staggered over to her. And with a rattling sound in his throat, like a man conquered by some inevitable force, with a wild, life-hungry moaning and groaning for mercy, he collapsed upon his knees before her, wringing his hands.

Francesco would perhaps not have succumbed to his passion in

such a degree for a long time, if the villagers' crime against Agata had not mingled with it a nameless, burning, humane compassion. He realized what this creature, endowed by God with the beauty of Aphrodite, must look forward to without a protector. He had been made her protector by circumstance, had perhaps saved her from being stoned to death. He had thereby gained a certain personal claim to her—a thought which was not clear to him, but which influenced his actions: operating unconsciously, it cleared away all sorts of inhibitions. And he saw no possibility of ever again withdrawing his hand from the outcast. He would stand by her side, even if the world and God stood on the other. Such reflections, such emotional currents were unexpectedly united with the stream of passion, and so the latter overflowed its banks.

For the moment, however, his behaviour was not a betrayal of the right, the consequence of a resolve to sin: it was only a state of weakness, of helplessness. Why he did what he was doing he could not have told. In truth he was really doing nothing. Only something was happening to him. And Agata, who really should have been frightened now, was not frightened, but seemed to have forgotten that Francesco was a stranger to her and a priest. He seemed all at once to have become her brother. And while her weeping increased to sobbing, she not only permitted him, now likewise shaken by dry sobs, to embrace her as if to comfort her, but she lowered her tear-streaming face and hid it on his breast.

Now she had become a child and he her father, by virtue of his seeking to comfort her in her sorrow. But he had never felt the body of a woman so close to him, and his caresses and his tenderness were soon more than fatherly. To be sure, he felt clearly that there was something like a confession in the girl's sobbing and misery. He realized that she knew to what a hateful love she owed her existence, and was weeping over it with him in equal sorrow. He was bearing her distress, her pain with her. Thus their souls were united. But he soon lifted her sweet Madonna-face to his own, clasping her around the neck and drawing her to him, and when he had long feasted greedily on what he held imprisoned, with the fire of madness in his eye he suddenly dropped like a hawk upon her hot, tear-salted mouth and remained indissolubly fused with it. —After a few moments of earthly time, but eternities of ecstasy, Francesco suddenly tore himself away and stood firmly on both feet, with the taste of blood on his lips. "Come," he said, "you

cannot go home alone without protection, and so I shall accompany you."

A changeable sky hung over the Alpine world as Francesco and Agata stole out of the parsonage. They turned into a field-path on which they climbed down unseen from terrace to terrace between mulberry-trees and through garlands of grape-vines. Francesco knew very well what lay behind him and what Rubicon he had now crossed, but he could feel no regret. The night was sultry. In the plain of Lombardy, it seemed, thunder-storms were moving about; distant flashes shot up in fan-shaped rays behind the giant silhouettes of the mountains. Odours of the immense lilac-tree under the windows of the parsonage floated down with the passing, seeping water of the branching brooks, mingled with warm and cold currents of air. The two inebriates did not speak. He supported her as often as they climbed down the wall in the darkness to a lower terrace, and would perhaps catch her in his arms, so that her heart beat on his, his thirsty mouth clung to hers. They did not really know where they were going, for from the depths of the Savaglia's gorge no path led up the Alp. They were agreed on this, however, that they must avoid the ascent to it through the village. Still the aim was not to attain any external, any distant goal, but to enjoy fully their immediate attainment.

Francesco celebrated early mass punctually the next morning. His absence had been noted by nobody, his return not even by Petronilla. The haste with which he had to cleanse himself, join the waiting ministrants in the sacristy, and go to the altar before the expectant little congregation, prevented him from coming to his senses. This took place when he was once more in the parsonage, once more in his little room, where the housekeeper had set the customary breakfast before him. But his recovery did not at once bring the clearness of sobriety. Rather, the old environment, the rising day gave to his past experience the guise of something unreal, which faded like a dream of yesterday. But here was reality, after all. And although it outdid in fantastic incredibility any dream that Francesco had ever dreamed, yet he could not disavow it. He had taken a fearful fall, there could be no quibbling about that: the question was whether any recovery at all from this fall into sin was still possible. The plunge was so deep and from such a height

that the priest could not help despairing of it. Not only from a churchly, but also from a worldly point of view, this terrible fall was unexampled. Francesco thought of the *Sindaco*, and how he had talked with him on the possibility of saving the outcasts of the Alp. Only now, in secret and in his deep humiliation, did he recognize the whole priestly arrogance, the whole overweening conceit that had puffed him up at that time. He gritted his teeth for shame, he writhed with degradation, vain, unmasked, in naked helplessness. Had he not just been a saint? Had not women and virgins of Soana looked up to him almost with idolatry?

The youth started up from the chair and the breviary on the table, in which he had pretended to be absorbed. It had seemed to him as if a hail of stones were rattling against the house: not in the manner of the previous day, when they were trying to stone Agata, but with hundredfold, thousandfold strength; as if the parsonage were to be razed or at least turned into a rubbish-heap, and he buried under it like the flattened corpse of a poisonous toad. He had heard strange sounds, terrible shrieks, frenzied shouts, and knew that among the frenzied ones who were throwing stones there were not only all Soana, the *Sindaco*, and his wife, but also Scarbota and his family, and in the very foreground his own mother.

But after a few hours very different fantasies and very different emotions had come to dislodge the others. Everything that had been born of his heart-searching, his horror at the deed, his contrition, now seemed never to have existed. A wholly unfamiliar distress, a burning thirst, was drying him up. His spirit cried out, as one who rolls with parched throat on the burning desert sand and cries for water. The air seemed to be without those substances which are required for breathing. The parsonage became a cage to the priest. He strode between its walls with aching knees, as restless as a beast of prey, resolved if he were not freed, to rush against the wall and shatter his skull rather than continue in such an existence. How is it possible to live as a dead man, he asked himself, as he observed the villagers through the window. How are they willing or able to breathe? How do they endure their miserable existence, since they do not know that which I have enjoyed and am now deprived of? And Francesco grew within himself. He looked down upon popes, emperors, princes, bishops, in short upon all men, as men do upon ants. Even in his thirst, his misery, his deprivation, he did so. To be sure, he was no longer master of

his life. A supreme enchantment had made him a victim of Eros, of the god who is older and mightier than Zeus and the other gods; he was will-less, and without Agata would have been completely lifeless. He had read in the writings of the ancients about such sorcery and about Eros, and despised both with a smile. Now he felt clearly that one must actually think of an arrow-shot and a deep wound, with which, according to the ancients, the god poisoned the blood of his victims. This wound burned, bored, flamed, rankled, gnawed within him. He felt terribly piercing pains—until at nightfall, inwardly almost screaming with happiness, he set out for that same little island-universe which had united him yesterday with his beloved, and where he had agreed upon a new meeting with her.

THE mountain-herdsman Ludovico, known to the inhabitants of the district as The Heretic of Soana, fell into silence when he had come to the place where his manuscript breaks off. The visitor would have liked to hear the end of the narrative. However, when he had the candour to express this desire, his host informed him that his manuscript went no further. And he was of the opinion that the story could end here, indeed must do so. The visitor was not of this opinion.

What became of Agata and Francesco, of Francesco and Agata? Did the story remain a secret or was it discovered? Did the lovers find lasting or temporary pleasure in each other? Did Francesco's mother learn of the affair? And finally, the listener wished to know whether a real incident formed the basis of the story, or whether it was an out-and-out fiction.

"I have already said," replied Ludovico, paling slightly, "that a real incident set me to scribbling." Thereupon he was silent for a long time. "About six years ago," he continued, "a priest was driven with sticks and stones—literally—from the altar and the church. At any rate, it was told to me by so many people, when I returned from Argentina to Europe and came to this region, that I do not doubt the incident itself. Also, the incestuous Scarabotas, though not under that name, lived here on Monte Generoso. The name Agata is invented: I simply took it from the little chapel of St Agatha, over which you see the brown ospreys are still circling. But the Scarabotas, among other children of sin, did really have a

grown daughter, and the priest was accused of illicit intercourse with her. They say he did not disavow the fact, nor evince the slightest remorse, and they claim that the Pope excommunicated him for it. The Scarabotas had to leave the region. They are said—the parents, not the children—to have died of yellow fever in Rio.”

The wine and the excitement which had been produced in the listener by place, hour, and company, and especially by the reading of the composition, combined with all sorts of mystic circumstances, made him still more importunate. He asked again as to the fate of Francesco and Agata. As to this the herder could make no statement. “They are merely said to have been for a long time the scandal of the district, in that they desecrated and profaned the scattered solitary shrines, and misused them as asylums for their infamous pleasures.” At these words the recluse burst into loud laughter which continued for some time unchecked.

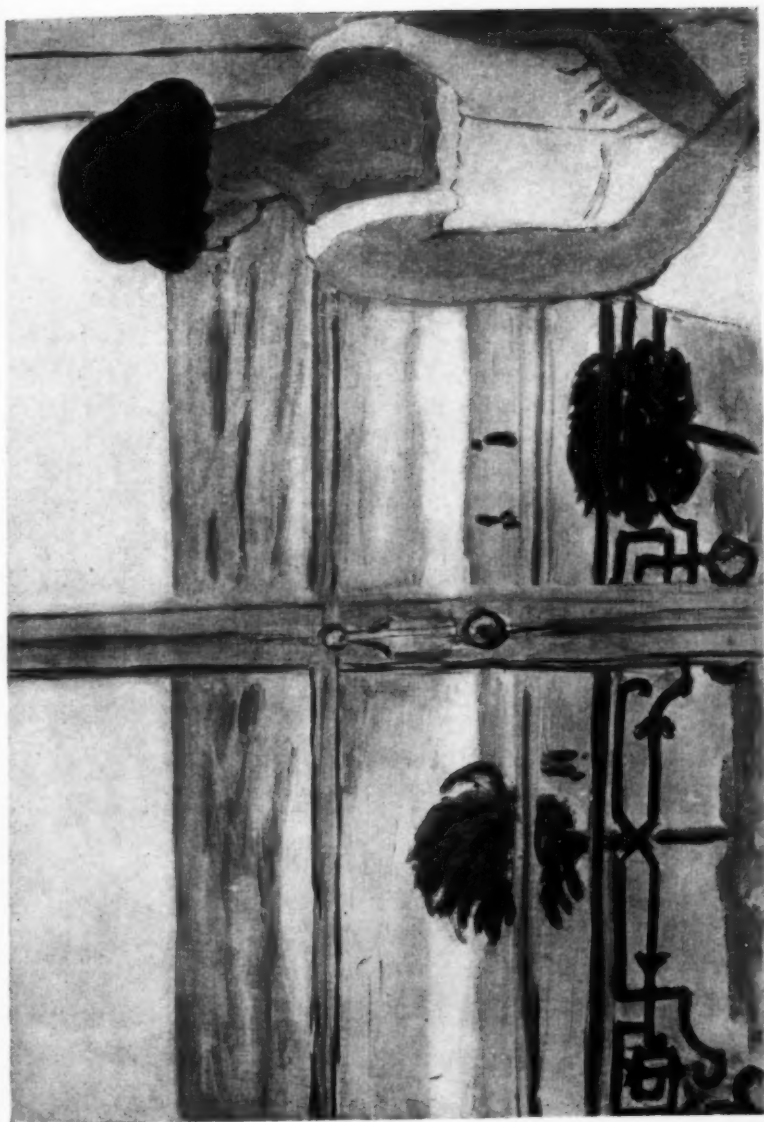
The End

FESTOONS OF FISHES

BY ALFRED KREYMBORG

Incognitos of masquerading moons
 Refute the theories philosophers
 Propound who blow their cheeks to fill balloons
 And call their windy whims interpreters;
 The swimming islands of the naked sun
 Confound a telescope to ignorance
 By dancing like oases on the run
 Or delicate mirages in a trance;

The torrents of the sky reduce the earth,
 A brittle stone, to powdered, liquid sand;
 Amuse themselves with slanting, silver mirth
 If hermits claim they've found the hidden hand;
 Among the coral crypts that hold the sea,
 Festoons of fishes weave insanity.



Courtesy of Bernheim Jeune, Paris

GIRL AT WINDOW. BY HENRI MATISSE

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THE PROGRESS OF PAINTING

BY THOMAS CRAVEN

INDIVIDUAL TENDENCIES

MODERNISM made its first public appearance as a revolt against the formless productions of the Impressionists. From the armour of Bronzino and the silks of Titian, through Dutch and Spanish schools of tone to Manet and the painters of atmosphere, the history of art, as I have outlined it, is the gradual dissolution of form. With Impressionism this became an accomplished fact; and it is worth noting that the champions of Monet, Pissarro, and other passive disciples of sunlight, noisily announced the "final purity of painting." Great stress was laid on the "innocence of the eye," the eye that could see and do nothing else; that registered nature impartially like the lens of a camera, and was not hampered by the action of a critical and inquiring mind. This philosophy was doomed to sudden destruction.

The new movement is already old and complicated. It was not born into the world overnight by spontaneous generation, nor was it conceived by madmen and merchants. It is a continuation of the art of the far past, a readjustment rather than a revolution. Art like philosophy has its constant recurrences. All periods overlap; and during that long barren interval preceding Impressionism there was no organized denial of form: Ingres, Delacroix, Courbet, Daumier, Constable, and even David, by their intellectual contemplation of structural harmonics, kept art from perishing from the earth. But the trend was toward the unreflective worship of nature, and Impressionism was the inevitable result of such a course. The new movement destroyed Impressionism by assimilating it, and through Cézanne, a painter with a vision, turned art back to the fundamental consideration of form and design.

Cézanne, influenced by Delacroix, whom he ardently admired, studied classic painting in the Louvre. For a while he emulated the realism of Courbet and Daumier, and his canvases done in the old manner of handling light and shade were intrinsically stronger than

those of Manet, though by no means so excellent in technical finish. Swayed by Pissarro, whose command over natural light has never been equalled, he adopted the Impressionistic palette; but after discovering the thinness and want of purpose in the tone-painters, returned again to the Louvre, made notes and small copies of the great masters, and eventually began to penetrate the secrets of Renaissance composition. It was owing to his exhaustive investigation of classic art that Cézanne gained insight into the tri-dimensional form and design which had its beginning in Masaccio, and which, because of a highly involved and extraneous interest in surfaces—textures and values—had been lost. He was conscious of the compelling nature of clearly conceived and clearly presented form, and of the imperative need for a sequence between forms.

Convinced of the "natural" truth of the Impressionistic palette, with its nervous atmosphere of glowing pigment, and realizing at the same time that a formless art was worse than none at all, Cézanne entered into the complicated process of revealing and composing form in its material and rhythmical aspects by the juxtaposition of colours. His first experiments are definitely referable to the method of Pissarro. In painting objects he not only changed their actual positions in space to harmonize with his ideas of design, but also subjected them to a series of colour divisions set down with the determination to achieve, if possible, the functional use of the medium. By introducing spectral tints from yellow to violet in modelling his forms from light to dark, he did, in a material sense, succeed in uniting form and colour—sometimes, I must confess, at the sacrifice of the clarity of his design. This colour-form procedure called for rigid attention to the planes of objects: to retain solidity and deep space in a scheme where darks vibrated and were as colourful as lights, he was instigated to a profound study of the geometrical formation of cubic structure; and his method, often minute and very technical, was at once analytical, and as concerns design, creative. He made form with the implements of naturalism; and any one with the slightest notion of what plastic form really is, can appreciate the unswerving fierceness of his struggles. This was the first logical move toward increasing the reality, the freedom, and the force of art since the Renaissance.

Cézanne replaced the pale tonal suggestions of the literalists with a rich atmosphere of colour, and what was much more important,

awakened the modern mind to the significance of the far past, to a conception of real form, solid, thick, material, and plastic. His influence on the art of to-day has been incalculable. At first scorned, then accepted, he has latterly been awarded the Olympian crown. There is no occasion in the present paper to argue his definitive rank. We might with reason proclaim him the most interesting figure in painting since Rembrandt, but this judgement does not absolve us from pointing out his limitations. A large part of his groping labour went into technical processes. He asseverated the necessity for form and design, and created unmistakably a high order of both, but he never arrived at the breadth of the Renaissance masters. His canvases are more intense, but the struggle and strain are obvious, and his work lacks the stately completion of the old art. His colour divisions, too small and broken to function as distinct parts of design, exhibit the planes of objects instead of their mass—design is more often suggested than achieved. But it is precisely the primitive and incomplete nature of his genius that has so powerfully actuated painters, and I can say without hesitation that practically the whole of modern art had its origin in this man.

Cézanne accepted occidental tradition. He yearned to make with his Impressionistic colour something as strong and robust as the masterpieces of the Renaissance—the “museum paintings” in his own naïve speech. His goal was reality, a full, rich, tri-dimensional world in whose mass and depth we might encounter subjective experiences comparable in force with the experiences of practical life. He held all flat art in contempt—philosophically an unjustifiable contempt, for most of the world’s fine painting is flat, those artists who have truly disengaged objects from a background being rare indeed. To him Gauguin was intolerable. The frank decorations of this barbarian bore no signs of the struggles of formal creation. His opinion in this case has been substantiated. Gauguin’s exotic magnetism is waning; his pictures carry no stimulation for the student, and attract only lazy minds who are tired of life and turn to art for soothing relief.

After the death of Cézanne new movements followed apace, the most important of which was Cubism. I shall not undertake to name the discoverer of this school—the question has been debated at great length and to no profit in the cafés of Paris—but over its source there can be no dispute. Cézanne’s form was composed of

coloured planes, one defined against the other; the Cubists enlarged upon these planes, and converted the contrasting colours into simple masses of light and dark. This process, if sufficiently pursued, abstracts a natural object into its closest geometrical equivalent. But it would be a grave error to suppose the movement only a modification of Cézanne's technique. Intellectually it was in line with classic ideals, in some respects a rebirth of those ideals, and the art of Cézanne provided both an inspiration and a means. Cubism advocated form. It became immediately popular for two reasons: it attacked conventional painting and current superstition in the most combative terms; its radicalism was non-representative, and therefore a tonic to young minds surfeited with the academy. There are few modern painters who have not profited in one way or another by its teachings. Cubism implies the diametrical opposite of imitation, and though it is not difficult to detect the inadequate scope of its geometrical expression, we cannot afford to overlook its beneficial influences.

Cubism disintegrates design. It is impossible to translate objects into a congeries of forms, and to give these forms sequential connexion. Such a method is not conducive to composition on a large scale. The activity of the artist is circumscribed: he may, like Picasso and Leger, present segments of true form, but these segments are devoid of integral unity. A Cubistic picture is a solid assemblage of irrelative details. Its exponents have failed to see the necessity for the clean contour, to grasp the fact that decisive linear variations capable of being followed without strained attention are indispensable to rhythm. The movement has about run its course. Picasso, if not the originator, at least the outstanding figure, has abandoned it and gone forward into higher and harder fields. But his recent sculpturesque nudes would never have been possible without his preliminary training in the cubic anatomy of form. And without a thorough understanding of planal structure, Jean Marchand would not have developed the sharp massiveness and straightforward solidity of his compositions.

Cubism has proved to be a transitional measure, a bridge, I might say, leading from the unfinished painting of Cézanne to the art of to-morrow, an art which will be, I hope, as lofty and complete as the masterpieces of the Renaissance, and much more intense in reality. Of the eccentricities I need say little: the movement has

been vulgarized, as noted in the first part of the article, by a few charlatans, a number of dilettantes, and a good many hot-headed youths avid of notoriety. Fortunately the public can no longer be shocked, and work must stand or fall according to its merits.

Shortly after Cubism had stirred the curiosity of a jaded public, and kindled the wrath of the old-fashioned critics, there came out of Italy a noisy band of heretics known as Futurists. The message exploited by the leaders of this band was derived from Expressionism, a theory unallied with the classic doctrine of Cézanne and Picasso, but fully as radical in its antipathy to the conventions of *salon* painting. The movement was skilfully concerted, well advertised, and adroitly managed; it had a propaganda to offer, and it was bent on driving it home in the most effectual modern style. In plain words its manifesto was this: "The language of the old art is dead. We have a new idiom, an exciting vehicle, a set of personal symbols compounded of anything and everything; we will put into graphic form live states of the soul; we will jerk your sensibilities into the most acute responses; with our arresting emblems of brilliant colour and free line we will make you feel art against your will." Briefly, it insisted that art is a matter of emotive susceptibility, that true feeling creates true and worthy expression.

The influence of Futurism, despite its challenging publicity, has been of a cryptic nature. As a school it is virtually dead; and I am not sure that such contemplative workmen as Kandinsky and Severini would relish the original label. But it promulgated an idea shared by a long list of modern artists. The Expressionistic slogan, "True feeling makes true art," has become the painter's panacea, and in addition, an unanswerable reply to the inquisitive layman. This idea disguises every imaginable sort of stupidity, lack of knowledge, and deficiency of vision; it raises the puerile scratches of the incompetent crank into the realm of the masters. Hence its popularity. But like many of the ideas of faith-healers and religious mystics, it is based upon a fundamental truth. It states conclusively that the artist must have a natural and not a forced interest in the things he engages to present. In its highest philosophical form, as evolved by Croce, it postulates intuitive knowledge as an artistic necessity. Viewed in this light, Expressionism is a cardinal factor in aesthetics, for it brands as inartistic all virtuosity, exhibitionism, opportunism, and academic cultivation. Few

of its adherents, however, are alive to its true meaning, and many painters guilty of everything it condemns unwittingly flourish its banner. America's leading water-colourist, John Marin, has some of the "true feeling that makes true art," but Marin is too deeply versed in the work of Cézanne and the old masters to mistake design for the unguided flow of the sentiment. Marin is the happy medium between feeling and imagination, and his work in his chosen field is unapproachable.

The repudiation of imitative art, as formulated by the above schools, promoted a lively interest in original sources. Painters went beyond the Renaissance to the earliest records—to the archaic carvings of the East, Congo sculpture, and the caves of Altamira. Matisse, with an instinctive love for the Persians, was first in the field. Before the rise of Cubism he had abandoned Cézanne's classic leanings, and casting about for inspiration of a less exacting character, decided on the Asiatics. Forthwith he set himself to the hopeless task of expressing modern ideas in primitive terms. He has had innumerable followers, for nothing is quite so easy as the simple trick of pulling a primitive mask over incapacity. But Matisse is an eminent artist. His Persian inclinations are legitimate, and in a measure, helpful. As a linear draughtsman he has few equals and no superiors among the moderns; and a study of the early art has crystallized his ability. He has learned from the ancients many of the secrets of simplification and undiluted form, and when he has adapted these to modern ideas, his expression has been successful; but his attempts to throw himself into a primitive state of mind have brought forth distortions. Most of his sculpture is too imitative of the negroes to be of value. No sophisticated mind can acquire a naïve vision by an act of will.

The interest in primitive forms has received a pronounced stimulus from another quarter—from the work of Rousseau, a man who may be classified as the exact opposite of Matisse. Rousseau in many ways is a true primitive, a modern without modern equipment either in technique or intellect; and his charming pictures recalling the naïve fancy of the old manuscript makers have unbalanced many a painter of talent. He is a curious exception in art, a sort of delightful idiosyncrasy; his work has neither technical nor philosophical merit, and painters who have read these qualities into it have ended in the most servile imitation. Rousseau, contrary

to his many admirers, has nothing to offer the mind. His art as a source of knowledge is sterile. He has the charm of a blind fiddler playing sweetly by ear; or the untutored old man lisping a fairy-tale in the musical numbers of a child. Notwithstanding the meagreness of his gifts, he is a spiritual force. Because of his "true feeling," and his unguided, rambling integrity, the Expressionists point to him as living proof of the value of uncultivated intuition.

Of all the issues of modern art, the one which has remained the most bewildering to the layman is abstraction. While we can single out no authentic school of abstractionists, the majority of the younger painters have clung to the belief that if you destroy representation, you have purified form, and accordingly have produced a higher art. Now Roger Fry has shown beyond question that non-representative form is an impossibility—the instant planes are opposed to one another, the effect is representation of something; otherwise there would be neither meaning nor form to contrasting areas. In a larger sense, of course, all art is founded upon abstraction, the groundwork, or the design, being a graphic weaving of lines to indicate action and counter-action; but design is only the accompaniment of art, and not art itself, the instrument which enables man to articulate his experiences. Unfortunately most of the pure abstractionists have made design an end in itself.

The development of this propensity has not been unnatural. Cubism, which arose from the enlargement of Cézanne's geometrical planes, and which was, by its very name and reason for existence, an art of three dimensions, by a continual process of extension has ended in a flat pattern. This may seem paradoxical, but the result is inescapable. The three visible planes of a cube when projected beyond the limits of vision, that is, to the frame of the canvas, cease to function as indications of solidity and become simply three flat tones. Matisse has been another spur to the tendency, but his work has been more forthright, and entirely at variance with the mechanics of Cubism. He has aimed at oriental decoration, at clean flat design in which every superfluous patch has been eliminated; and though his successful efforts may strike us at first glance as only spontaneous sketches, they are actually the fruit of the utmost deliberation. His most recent pictures are somewhat disappointing. Matisse has succumbed to the apocryphal lure of naturalism. Probably the most original of living colourists, he has

begun to use tones in the almost uncanny duplication of natural light and shade. This makeshift lends a false realism to his painting. Upon a carefully studied and lucid framework he has imposed flat colour-areas, beautiful in themselves, but of such positive photographic accuracy as to wreck design, and to give the illusion of the diffuse world of the camera.

With reservations, the modern interest in abstraction has been salutary. It has drawn the attention of painters and public to the importance of design, and has made clear even to the dullest workman the fact that art, at bottom, is built upon a rational plan. But its interest is mainly technical, and painters have committed the unpardonable blunder of hanging experiments and inviting the public to accept them as finished works of art. In France the zest for psychological investigation has plunged the abstractionists into the depths of materiality. It goes without saying that a painter must have a command over his materials, but to make art an affair of textures is frankly preposterous. An artist should use his medium as unconsciously as the pedestrian uses his bones. There is no hope in aesthetics for those misguided souls who plant upon a background all sorts of matter—cement, cigar boxes, linoleum, newspapers, and door-bells—their contrivances are ingenious, but too eccentric to be taken seriously. The primacy given to materials has begotten some of the most astonishing technicians in the history of painting, but these men should be in the crafts where their highly specialized talents and their mechanical competence in all departments of art could be applied to serviceable ends.

The pure abstractionist sees, feels, and realizes little in the world. Instead of life, reality, and structure, he gives us textures, arbitrary linear combinations, and decorative prettiness.

In recapitulation we can say that the strongest testimony to the vitality of Modernism is the diversity of its forms—which is only another way of emphasizing its value as a reflection of a complex social structure. We are, perhaps, too close to its puzzling vigour, too much a part of its impatient growth, to render judgement upon its variegated achievements; but underlying all its manifestations—its reckless claims, its abnormal devotions, and its sober diligence—we find one consolidating purpose. Modernism gives precedence to ideas; it stands specifically for creative thought as opposed to imitation of nature, and in this respect it is the most significant movement in art since the Renaissance.

The tendencies which enable us to pierce the spirit of the artist, to get at the compelling force beneath individual endeavour, and to determine the approximate position of painters as imaginative agents, have been definitely examined: the classicism of Cézanne and the Cubists (a revival of the occidental tradition); the primitivism of Gauguin, Matisse, and Rousseau; Expressionism, which refuses to sanction the aesthetic value of formal knowledge; and the stark abstractionism of those who have pushed the freedom of art into an absorption in technical processes. All of these tendencies intermingle—art becomes positive only when it is narrow and puritanical—and I cannot point to a single modern painter whose work is limited to a precise category. Consequently the divisions must be regarded as analytic tools and not as absolute niches; as means to separate the various influences which have been in operation.

All of this is purely critical. Appreciation, in the aesthetic sense, is a different matter, simple in some of its phases, abstruse in others. Response to the qualities of a given work of art means the discovery of those qualities in one's self; the concrete object makes precise, and gives form to latent feelings or ideas. Critically the explanation of the appeal of pictures is an elementary task, but when the aesthetic response is treated psychologically and co-ordinated with the nervous system, immense difficulties arise. In truth the whole problem of social contact hinges on the question of individual differences and agreements. Such a study is beyond the province of a paper devoted to art alone; but it is well to remind the reader that one cannot respond equally and sympathetically to a number of artists, even though these artists be on a parity of excellence. One can react only to the art which coincides with one's own feelings and opinions. Art is great in proportion to its power to attract the largest audiences throughout the longest period of time, and the greatest art, because of its humanity and its philosophy, is inexhaustible. The numerous sides, emotional and intellectual, of profound aesthetic thought, when put into plastic expression, offer the student so many points of approach that his sympathy is enlisted in spite of his temperamental objections. Thus it happens that a painter like Rubens, on account of his flamboyant sensuality, may repel the modern feelings—it is fashionable just now to condemn Rubens—but as we look more deeply into the nature of art and grow more familiar with its syntax, we go to him with increasing interest. His gifts were so vast, the range of his craft so far-reach-

ing, his form so luxurious and succulent, that whoever studies art conquers his original prejudices and comes to a place where he must respond, must find a contact with the Rubens genius. So it is with Cézanne. Many a young man who has at first scoffed at this grotesque personality, and ridiculed him as a clumsy abortionist, has, with a little more knowledge to his credit, subscribed to every article in the Cézanne creed. Indeed it is a pleasant sight to watch the various types of artists rally about this uncouth figure. He stands pre-eminent among moderns, a man whose comprehensive vision has inspired the creative energies of every species of honest temperament.

All the special tendencies of the new movement are corollaries from Cézanne's determination to restore artistic reality to the field of vision where it truly belongs. That his ambition was a full, tri-dimensional form in no wise detracts from the interest of painters who naturally prefer a decorative style. Like all well-composed art, his canvases contain a wealth of provocative surface shapes and lateral rhythms, elements which have won the allegiance of painters opposed to released form.

A study of modern sculpture offers even greater difficulties than painting, though its passage from the unity of the block-form to Impressionism has been analagous. The art of Rodin was the climax of a textural progression which began as far back as the monumental compositions of Michael Angelo. The great Florentine, perceiving to the last degree the formal sequences of the hewn figure, created in marble a reality as convincing as the life of nature and many times more powerful. His successors, particularly of the French schools, confusing effect with cause, attributed his realism to anatomical replicas, and in their pursuit of this false premise reduced sculptural expression to the model.

The evolution of modelling in the round, as I have noted in an essay on *The Artistic Vision* (*THE DIAL*, July 1921) is an elaboration of purely frontal conceptions. The reality of primitive sculpture was augmented by the quadruple relationship of its fronts: the early workman drew his design on the four surfaces of the block, and then carved toward a common centre. But the material retained its inherent stiffness, and what was accomplished in dignity and grandeur was neutralized by static lifelessness—the primitive mind could find no method of fixing a sequence between the planes

of the different faces. No matter how expertly the edges were rounded, the divisions remained. The Greeks, by uniting and increasing the sides of the shaft, conceived a sculptural anatomy which broke down the barrier between expression and experience, and converted the block into living form. Michael Angelo enlarged the range of planes and added to their number, and so thoroughly eliminated the frontal divisions that his work, technically speaking, is a perfect expression of our tactual and motor experiences.

Primitive art forms are unimaginative constructions. Nature was interpreted and not imitated, but the rendition of objects from memory-pictures quickly led to standardization. Drawing, as in the work of children, was limited to the front view and the profile, and statues were bilaterally symmetrical. Sculpture, like painting, grew plastic as the imagination entered into the reconstruction of experiences. It was only in the late Greek and Roman art that the process of modelling from direct observation interrupted the rise of creative power. The sculptors and painters who discovered that imitation served the popular taste quite as well as the realism of the great epochs, did far more harm to art than any public indifference. Fortunately the broken Roman tradition recalled the necessity for study and contemplation, and we have in the High Renaissance a truly organic sculptural expression, an art born of stored impressions and ordered by the imagination. Let it be understood that Michael Angelo's realism is a product of mind; it is knowledge transformed by imaginative vision, a human conception completely *realized* and as convincing as phenomenal experience.

But the Roman short-cut to realism was revived, and from Michael Angelo to Rodin the history of the art is a futile preoccupation with the imitation of appearances—Goujon and his bastard Greek huntresses; Canova with his smooth death-masks; Thorwaldsen's pedantic draperies. *Salon* sculpture, like *salon* painting, became a soulless, brainless mummery. The creative will had ceased to function—only the eyes and fingers were employed. If the imagination was used at all, it was to inject into marble some sentimental legend or half-felt poetic idea. Art is not expository—it springs from ideas, but is productive of emotions. The sombre humanity of the great age disappeared in the gestures of imitative trickery.

Rodin revolted against banality, but resembling the Impression-

ists in painting, failed to get at the sources of the curse. He exaggerated and intensified appearances, but seldom attempted the conception of ordered form. His celebrated anatomical studies are only deceptive polished surfaces. True sculptural anatomy consists in the development of sequential planes running up and down and round the block of a figure. Inasmuch as nature presents no such sequences to the eye alone, it follows that an art dependent on observation must be fragmentary—must carry no conviction of the unity of its parts. Rodin was conscious of this fact and tried to provide for it by leaving his figures attached to a roughly chiselled background. But this stratagem only made heavy what was already formless. Michael Angelo's unfinished pieces are invariably projected to the limits of the block. The modern academic formula which designates hollows as "darks," and resorts to modelling by light effects instead of by tactual feeling, has had its foremost example in Rodin. In no other sculptor can one find such perfect representation of atmosphere. Light seems not only to flow over Rodin's marble, but to be caught within it and to radiate from it. This, however, has no sculptural significance. It may be remarkable as an optical phenomenon; but it breaks up form, and renders impossible the realization of any sort of formal connexions.

Since Rodin, modern radical sculpture has turned against surface naturalism and advocated form. It also sets great store by tactual processes, and emphasizes the value of mind in its presentations. It is primitive simply because it is not yet capable of capturing reality by wholly imaginative methods. There is to-day no perfected rhythmical expression in modern sculpture. Brancusi, a master of delicately balanced blocks, would have us behold the world as a frozen silence, immobile and calm as death. His polished planes, rounded into imperceptibility, impel no thoughts of movement. Maillol and Epstein in Europe, and Faggi and Lachaise in America, are steadily moving from a primitive frontalism to a veritable plastic expression. Faggi's art adheres to the block-form, but at times is complicated by a Gothic fervour that runs into unintelligible symbolism. With Lachaise the field is opening swiftly. He rises to an intense realism, and it must be apparent, even to the novice, that such a realism, with its long, linear rhythms and its clear, harmonized masses, is no surface imitation. Lachaise so orders the grooves of his form that potential movement is inevitably

felt. And this is a rare achievement in modern or any other sculpture.

For the development of a complete rhythm extending through large masses of sculptural form, modern art has uncovered no gift like that of Thomas H. Benton, a painter who seems to belong neither to his own department nor to the domain of sculpture. Benton's work is still crude, and he has no respect for the laws and limitations of painting; but he has built up an art of form that is unique in the history of the subject. He has a sculptor's gifts and a painter's vision; and while it is too early to assert his final place as an artist, I am certain that the aestheticians of the future will have to deal at length with his curious and profoundly original form of expression.

In concluding the review I wish to make clear that the term progress has been used for convenience only. There has been no evolution in the sense of superior aesthetic achievement—only cycles of growth, culmination, and decadence. Art struggles toward a complete reality which, at certain favourable moments, is approached. But since perfection is unattainable, the quest in all its forms is eternal. In addition, the context of art is peculiar to its time, and this, in itself, makes any duplication of import an impossibility. The warfare between abstraction and experience is perpetually waging, and within this field there are periods of progress and decline. Occasionally a mean is reached, and however simple it may be, if it strikes man with a force equivalent to his experience, it is art.

MAGNOLIAS AND THE INTANGIBLE HORSE

BY GLENWAY WESCOTT

"But no beast comes"—Y.W.

The magnolia bud
stained with plum,
not built to open
but to remain tubular.

The watering place
full of white tubes
piled in pyramids,
where I bend
through pear-yellow air,
dream of my red horse—

his nose a spike
of chestnut flowers,
his tail and mane
silver-centred
curls, his shell-hoofs
pounding hollow
against mountains . . .

In sorrow
the sun breaks the bud
to a flower
like a fallen bird,
feathers bent up
and out, star-shaped.



A SILHOUETTE. BY ADI BEILER





A SILHOUETTE. BY ADI BEILER

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THE SAMOVAR

(A Little Tale, in the Russian Manner, without Psychology)

BY JOHN CURNOS

IVAN PETROFF'S custom, since becoming a widower, was to leave the lumber-yard, of which he was the owner, precisely at four o'clock each day and to wend his way home, where a hot samovar awaited him with a punctuality not less exact. A samovar, as every good Russian knows, is, if a comfort, not the same thing as a wife, even though it take turns at being hot and cold, at humming a song and keeping silent, at shining brightly on gala days—reflecting gladness—and being dully irresponsible on others. Nevertheless, since his wife's death, Petroff—or Ivan Stepanitch, as he was familiarly called—resisted the importunities of matchmakers: one might as well have asked him to have another samovar in the place of the one he had. Petroff had chosen that samovar with great care, just as he had chosen his lamented wife with great care. The one he saw in a shop window—the samovar, of course—the other behind a shop counter: nothing strange, to be sure, in either fact. How often he had passed that window and paused to look at the samovar. There was something about it that struck his fancy, just as later there was something about the woman he had married struck his fancy. It was not shaped quite like other samovars; or rather, this particular samovar had a shape, others hadn't. Other samovars had a straight up and down effect, without any curves or deviations in the body to make the thing interesting and piquant to the eye; this samovar curved in at the middle like a Greek urn or a finely shaped woman's waist. Though Petroff was far from being a *barin* (a noble) he somehow had an eye for these things: a fact which imparted a measure of confirmation to the report of his grandmother having been the illegitimate daughter of a *barin* in the neighbourhood. One day, after a long wooing of that samovar, unable any longer to resist the ever urging possessive instinct, he walked into the shop and at his request the young woman behind the counter went to the window and, lifting the desired object high

with her both hands—a manoeuvre which set off the young woman's shapeliness—put it tenderly on the counter. The whole effect was of a woman lifting a baby under the arms; at least so it seemed to Ivan Petroff. She smilingly looked down on the samovar and waited for Petroff to speak.

"How much?" muttered Petroff.

The young woman named the price.

"Rather high, isn't it?" said Petroff.

"I've got some at half the price," replied the young woman, still smiling. "But, of course, they are not the same thing. Look at the shape . . . the sparkle too! One in a thousand . . ."

"Y-yes . . . I see . . ." murmured Petroff, not looking at all at the samovar. He was actually, in a half-dazed way, realizing the background. He somehow, as yet vaguely, grasped that she, in her tight-fitting black frock, set off the samovar; the thought that they were like two pieces of a set stunned him. Yes, one in a thousand!

"I'll t-take it," he said at last hesitatingly, and slowly pulled out his wallet.

"Name and address, please!"

"Oh! . . . Ivan . . ."

"Ivan . . ." repeated the young woman after him, writing at the same time.

"Deuce take it! How prettily she says it!" thought Petroff, while she, pencil in hand, patiently waited.

"Ivan . . ." she repeated, noting his absent look and wishing to give him his cue.

"That's right," he said, "Ivan . . . Ivan Ste-pa-nitch . . . I mean Stepanovitch . . ."

"Ivan Stepanovitch," she repeated, and waited again.

"Pet-roff . . ."

"Ivan Stepanovitch Petroff . . ." she pronounced, gathering up all the fragments of his name, and added: "And what is your address?"

"Never mind!" he exclaimed suddenly. "I'll come back for it myself. But please give me a receipt."

Once in the street, Petroff drew out the receipt and read under the firm's name: "per Anna Svetloff." That was what he wanted the receipt for; he was afraid she would sign only her initials.

That was the worst about taking a fancy to a thing: in the end you wanted it. He now had his samovar. But how could he tell when he unwarily entered the shop that day that his small innocent fancy would breed a greater, an infinitely more difficult one of satisfaction, since merely to admire there was need of something more than the stopping before the shop-window; one had to go into the shop itself; moreover, one must go in to buy something. So Petroff began to frequent that shop on one pretext or another. The second time he went to the shop he bought a mouse-trap, though he already had three lying idle on the rummage-heap in the attic. On his third visit he bought a fishing-rod: goodness alone knew what he was going to fish for: all the fishing he's ever done has been in dreams. His next venture was a tin-opener. He went on buying these things, and as a result of his otherwise useless purchases had achieved the privilege of calling her familiarly, "Anna Pavlovna."

One day a strong impulse urged Petroff towards Anna Pavlovna. It was the same impulse, only ten thousand times stronger, that finally drove him to possess the samovar. Had it been one of those devilishly clever Frenchmen we hear of who had been thus in love, he would have asked the object of his affections out for a walk and deftly manoeuvred her towards a fashionable dressmaking establishment, where, pausing and allowing her eyes to fall on the nice feminine things in the shop-window, until her mouth had begun to water, he would have remarked with discreet casualness: "What do you say, dear, to going in and ordering a trousseau?" Then there is the case of the Spaniard, who put the question with equal effectiveness: "Shall you and I put our clothes in the same trunk and go on a long journey together?" Unfortunately our Ivan Petroff was not up to these clever French and Spanish tricks. He was a simple Russian, with honest if sometimes uncouth ways; nevertheless, with an eye, as it has already been observed, for the little niceties of life. He had not forgotten how nice she had looked behind the samovar, how one had set the other off, how much they seemed like two companion pieces of a set. Such was the picture she evoked, a picture which with the passing of days had grown tense and luminous, almost too large for the frame of his mind, which it threatened to split. So, having decided to speak to her, he approached her thus:

"Anna Pavlovna, you remember the samovar I bought of you?"

"Why shouldn't I remember it? It was such a nice one. I was quite sorry to part with it."

"That's just what I came to talk to you about. You needn't be parted from it. I came to ask you if you wouldn't come and pour tea for me? . . . I mean for always. . . ."

There was a silence. Petroff was afraid that she would say that she had already promised to pour tea for someone else. She looked serious for a while, then burst out laughing.

"What an original way you have of putting it, Ivan Stepanitch! Who could resist it? Of course, I'll come and pour tea for you. But tell me, Ivan Stepanitch, what did you buy a mouse-trap for . . . and a fishing-rod . . . and a bird-cage . . . and a monkey-wrench . . . and a tin-opener . . . and a . . . You didn't really want any of those things, did you?"

Petroff smiled assent shyly.

"Remember the day you bought the bird cage?" asked Anna Pavlovna, and he nodding in the affirmative, she went on: "You were going to say something to me that day, weren't you?" He again nodding in the affirmative, she continued: "Yes, I watched you, Ivan Stepanitch. I watched you, as you looked through the wires of the cage. You were looking at me. You said nothing. But your eyes gave you away. . . . You've got fine eyes, Ivan Stepanitch. . . . Come nearer, Ivan Stepanitch. . . ." And Ivan Stepanovitch drawing nearer, she impulsively seized his head between her hands, and kissed his eyes. "Don't you try," she said, laughing, "to fool a woman so long as you have those eyes. Of course, I'll come and pour tea for you!"

And so Ivan Stepanovitch took her home to pour tea for him. For a full year Anna Pavlovna poured tea for her Ivan. Then, one day she fell ill, and for days lay in a delirium, with intervals of calm. During one of these the nurse, all in white, poured out a cup of tea for her patient: for the samovar, on the insistent demands of the patient, was now in the sick-room. Anna Pavlovna watched the nurse pouring out tea, and imagined that the white figure was Death.

"No, no!" she cried, as the white figure approached her with a cup of tea. "Take it away! Don't make me drink it! I don't want to die! No, no—not just yet!"

II

Ivan Petroff's custom since becoming a widower—so our story began, you will remember—was to leave the lumber-yard, of which he was the owner, precisely at four o'clock each day, when he would wend his way home, where a hot samovar awaited him. Neighbours, on seeing him pass by, regulated their clocks by him (as the saying goes) so punctual were his goings and comings. Punctuality is not natural to a Russian, but Petroff was punctual. It is not to be wondered at, then, that he was regarded as a queer sort. Not that Petroff was business-like. Far from it. His punctuality was rather the result of apathy, become mechanical. He had been like that since his wife died. That had happened a year ago.

A samovar has much to answer for in Russian life. If it were not for samovars there might not be any Russian novels. This particular samovar had much to answer for in Petroff's life. The first day that he was unfaithful to it was the day that began Petroff's second adventure.

On leaving the lumber-yard that day, Ivan Petroff walked as usual as far as the church, where the road forked into two. As usual, he took off his hat and crossed himself. Then he did something unusual. Instead of taking the road to the right, as was his habit of over a year, he turned into the road to the left. An instant before he had no idea of turning to the left. He had no idea why he had turned into the road to the left. It was as if a magnet which had formerly drawn him to the right had now changed its position in the road to the left. Petroff himself had hardly realized what he had done until he felt a slap on his back and heard a familiar voice say:

"And what brings you this way, Ivan Stepanitch?"

Ivan Petroff looked at his questioner in a confused way and stammered:

". . . I? . . . I? I'm just taking a walk. . . ."

Petroff blushed. He could not lie gracefully. All the same, if he had wished to tell the truth, he could not have said just what took him that way and not the other way. But he felt a strong consciousness of unfaithfulness, a desire to get away from his own beloved samovar, which never ceased to remind him of the dear one, who daily, for a whole year, had poured him tea out of it.

At the next turn of the road was the inn, and thither he guiltily directed his footsteps, as in the old days, before he had married Anna Pavlovna.

He paid but slight attention to the sleigh at the door, and to the woman getting out of it, all wrapped in furs.

"Well, well, you haven't honoured us with your company for a long while," said the proprietor, greeting his former patron heartily.

"A *samovarchik* (a little samovar) please!" said Petroff with an embarrassed air, "and how are you, Pavel Timofeyevitch?"

A little samovar was brought, containing a mere fifteen tumblers, a small matter for a Russian, and our Ivan Petroff, removing his fur overcoat and his high fur cap, and undoing his caftan, sat down before the tea urn. Before pouring out the tea he gulped down a small vodka as a kind of appetizer.

In the Russian manner he put a small lump of sugar in his mouth and sipped the tea through it. He was drinking his third tumbler, when a woman, the same he had casually noted getting out of the sleigh, entered the inn. She surveyed the room, for an instant fixed Petroff with her eyes, and sat down at a table across the room, facing him. Apparently, she was staying there, for she did not have her furs with her. She also ordered a small samovar.

All of a sudden Petroff felt strongly conscious of the woman's presence, and on raising his eyes found hers fixed on his. And helplessly he felt his soul wrenched from his body with a kind of violence, drawn by the unfathomable power of those eyes. Then, she relinquished his soul and allowed it to drift back, now hers.

There was something about that woman which reminded him, indefinitely at first, of his lamented wife. There was, indeed, some similarity in their features, but the stranger's eyes were larger, more widely parted, and had a sense of knowledge and worldliness which the other's did not possess, and this was an added attraction. At all events, the superficial resemblance was in itself sufficiently startling to cause a flutter, and more than a flutter, in Ivan's heart, as his eyes, involuntarily, continued to drift in her direction, always to find her eyes responding with an intimate wonderment, as if to say: "I surely have seen you somewhere before? But whether I have seen you or not does not matter. I know you!"

In short, they were all-knowing eyes, and he felt them sounding him to the innermost depths of his being. Intent as that look was,

it was not a stare, for there was no hardness in it; indeed, it had all the tremulous modulation of pliant violin music stealing into one's heart without one knowing how. An inner fluid warmth, such as he had not remembered since his first courting of Anna, and surely not to be ascribed to tea, was stealing through Petroff and flooding him. It began to radiate from his moistened eyes and to wander in vapoury, lit-up clouds, which seemed to interpose themselves between him and the woman, so that he saw her as through a filmy mist. Such havoc can a woman play with a man's soul!

Stranger still, Petroff felt that the woman was undergoing a not unsimilar emotion. More than once, prodded by an inexplicable impulse, he was on the point of rising and asking her to join him at his samovar, but Petroff was a very shy man, and he could not screw up his courage to commit a possible effrontery to the unknown woman for whom, at first sight, he had contracted so tender a regard.

After two hours, poor Petroff paid the waiter and reluctantly took his departure. He felt the woman's eyes follow him until he had passed through the door, and immediately formed a mental resolution:

"I shall be here to-morrow at the same time . . . Deuce take it, I wish I had spoken to her!"

It would be as hard to say why Petroff made this sudden resolution as it would be to say what drew him here in the first place. Such was Petroff, such things happened to Petroff. Why inquire further?

At all events, on arriving home, he astonished the already wondering maid, Marusya, by instructing her not to prepare the samovar the next day, so that poor Marusya crossed herself and muttered:

"What's come over master? I hope nothing ill. The Saints preserve him!"

Petroff lay wide awake that night, and a woman's eyes, grey as a sunless sea, long eyelashes flickering, looked at him and beckoned out of the darkness, it was hard to tell whether to paradise or perdition.

Willingly, it is true, yet helplessly, Petroff at the same hour the next day wended his way towards the inn. He felt sure she would be there, yet feared that she might not. There was no one in the

room. He took the seat he had occupied the previous day, ordered a samovar, and waited, waited. . . . At last he heard the sound of a woman's voice, and knew at once it was hers. Palpitating instants became transformed in his heart into hammer-beats. That voice, indeed, though he had not heard it before, matched those eyes well. She was ordering a samovar. She glided into the room with a feline motion, and the brown fur of her long overcoat undulated to the rhythm of her body, and might have been integrally a part of her. She sat down in her former seat, and Petroff sat still and rigid in his, a serpent charmed. It was the same as yesterday, and Petroff could not screw up his courage to rise and speak. This time, having consulted her watch, she was the first to rise from the table, and departing, left Petroff a prey to the most agitated emotions.

For three days this little comedy was enacted, and on the fourth Petroff made up his mind to speak, come what will. After the sixth tumbler of tea, Petroff began to curse himself. The charming unknown did not come.

"I've missed my chance, the deuce take it!" he muttered to himself. "That's what comes of being a ninny and putting things off!"

At six o'clock he rose, and with a crest-fallen air walked out of the room, feeling like a whipped hungry dog, his tail between his legs.

"Perhaps to-morrow!" he murmured half-hopefully. Listlessly he arrived at his own door. Having deposited his hat and coat in the ante-room, he entered the dining-room. He found it lit up and the table set for dinner. He flung himself down on the sofa and gazed towards the table. A singular fact, which had at first escaped his notice, now, quite suddenly, impressed itself upon his consciousness, as he scratched his head in astonishment. The table was set for two! He sat up and looked again. There was no mistake. The table was set for two! He had not remembered having asked any one to dinner. Indeed, he had not asked any one to dinner since his wife had died.

What was the meaning of this? Petroff sat up and rubbed his eyes. A mood of enchantment held him and prevented him from calling Marusya. There was a temptation to discover the meaning of the illusion, if illusion it was, for himself. A thought slowly struggled in his simple brain, a sluggish, yet a wild thought.

. . . But that was impossible. . . . simply impossible. He was a fool and a simpleton to entertain such a thought. . . . His blood began to tingle through his veins hotly; afterwards, from head to foot, he trembled with the ague. He wondered: was he ill, was a fever setting in, or had the woman cast an evil spell upon him? And he remembered that he hadn't slept three nights. He had better have Marusya call a doctor. What was the good of a doctor? They were no remedy against a woman's eyes. There they were, even at that instant, between the half-parted draperies in the doorway, looking at him, penetrating him to the bottom of his soul.

She was real as life, and it was the first time that he had seen her hatless, showing a wealth of brown hair, rich with gold-tinged high lights. It was wound round her head in large, tight, snaky coils and under her broad high-arched brows her grave, long-lashed eyes were lapsing into a smile. She appeared to hold the draperies together with an invisible hand, and only her head showed through the opening.

Petroff sat transfixed, unable to move or say a word. He feared that if he stirred the vision would vanish.

The smile between the draperies broadened. Then the invisible hand flung aside the draperies, and the figure ran forward and dropped on its knees before Petroff.

"Here am I, Ivan Stepanitch. You wanted me, and I have come!"

Petroff said nothing. He was dazed and under a spell.

"You did want me, did you not?" she went on, as her hand sought his knee and rested quietly there.

"Yes" replied Petroff, galvanized into life by that touch. "But how do you know my name? Who are you, and where do you come from?"

"Don't ask questions, Ivan Stepanitch. But if you'd like to know, a little bird told me. As for my name, call me Maria Feodorovna. Aren't you glad I have come?" Petroff shyly put his hands on her shoulders.

"I'm real enough," laughed Maria Feodorovna.

"I am not dreaming?"

"You may kiss me when you wake up. . . . Then we'll have some dinner. I am frightfully hungry. I've asked Marusya to cook something especially nice."

"I have not slept three nights because of you," said Petroff, stroking her hair.

"And you are not going to sleep a fourth," laughed Maria Feodorovna. "Poor Ivan!"

"You don't mean that you are going to leave me," exclaimed Petroff, alarm in his voice.

"No, of course not, you stupid! What I meant was that I have come to stay. You do want me?"

In answer, he seized one of her hands and covered it with kisses.

III

Who was she? Where had she come from? What had been her past? Ivan never knew. Every time he questioned her, during their lovings, she simply laughed and replied:

"What does it matter, darling? You are happy, aren't you? People who are happy shouldn't ask questions. Just imagine I've dropped down from heaven, and take your happiness. Did I ask questions when I first saw you? I didn't even ask you whether I might come or not. I liked you at first sight, and I knew that you liked me. That was enough. And so I just came. . . ."

But the male in him, jealous of her past history, was not satisfied, and he importuned her:

"But did you . . . I mean are you a widow? . . . Are you . . ."

She always stopped a question with a kiss and the remonstrance:

"Don't ask questions. Questions bring unhappiness . . . they are always the beginning of all trouble."

Three months they lived as man and wife, and were happy together. She turned a deaf ear to his repeated proposals of marriage. She placed all such proposals in the category of unnecessary questions.

"There you go again with your questions! Aren't we happy as we are? What do you want to marry me for? Besides . . ."

She always paused there, just as he felt he was on the eve of a revelation, which might furnish the key to the mystery of her. But having said, "Besides . . ." she would scrutinize the eager, questioning face of her lover, and, after a pause, break into a tantalizing laugh.

"Never mind, Ivan. It doesn't matter so long as we are happy.
. . . It doesn't really matter."

Under her caresses, Petroff would forget everything, to return afterwards to an intense preoccupation with that portentous "Besides." He felt sure that there was much behind that enigmatic word, and his mind was troubled. Had she run away from a husband? Was she not free to marry him? He was fiercely in love with Maria Feodorovna, and he thought that if she would only consent to marry him, he would secure her for ever. But there was always that "Besides"!

One evening a strange thing happened. It was winter. There was snow on the ground, but no frost, and the windows were clear. Maria Feodorovna had not drawn the curtains. She and Ivan sat before the samovar, and Maria was pouring out tea. The red-shaded lamp-light cast rich glints on the old curved copper of the samovar and found responsive echoes in the now coppery surfaces of Maria's face.

Maria sat with a preoccupied air, and her eyes were full of a mysterious apprehension, which communicated itself to Ivan. He noticed that her hand trembled when she handed him his glass of tea. He knew her to be subject to occult perceptions, which usually proved to be uncannily accurate. But never before had he seen her in such an intense state of repressed agitation.

It was then that the fearful thing happened. It happened so quickly, so suddenly, and so unaccountably. First there was the report of a revolver, instantaneously followed by a crash of window panes; something hard and sharp struck the samovar; a tiny jet of water and steam came pouring out of the wounded urn. Maria gave a scream. With quiet presence of mind, Ivan blew out the lamp and forced Maria down to the floor. He felt his way to the cupboard and extracted a revolver, which he kept loaded for any emergency. He then flung himself out of doors and caught sight of a moving shadow faint against the snow, which crunched under the prowler's furtive footfalls.

Petroff fired. The figure began to run. Once or twice it paused to aim a revolver. They kept up a running fire in the half dark. Once the unknown uttered an oath, as of pain, then ran out of the gate. Ivan gave up the pursuit.

He put up the shutters before re-entering the house. On lighting

the lamp he found Maria Feodorovna sitting on the floor where he had left her. Her face was ashen pale, and fear had not left her eyes.

He told her what had happened. She quickly recovered her spirits, and restored Ivan's as well. That night she loved Ivan with redoubled ardour.

In the morning there was no sign of her. Only a strange note on her pillow to say that it was better that they should part on a high note of passion than that their love should degenerate into habitual caresses and grey domesticity. How could she say that when he loved her so!

In his garden, now covered with snow, he discovered a trail of blood, leading to the gateway and beyond. It was left by the prowler of the previous night's encounter.

Later in the day, in the village, men talked of a stranger who came to the district hospital, dripping with blood, wounded, and died there, and before death raved about a woman who had loved him for a space and left him.

Petroff listened, but said nothing. He went home, and locking the doors, went forth with a knapsack. In the inside pocket of his caftan was a revolver.

PETITE CHANSON DISCRETE POUR CELLES
QUI ONT PLEURE LES MECHANTS GARS

BY LEGARE GEORGE

*"Elise: Mais, au moins, ils ne
dédaignent pas la bouche dont
la salive les a éivrés? Moi:
Ils en oublient jusqu'au goût.
Elise: Eux aussi? J'ai envie de
pleurer!"*

—Nuit au Luxembourg.

*Les vierges,
bienveillantes
mais modes-
tes, embras-
sent les gars
pour les laisser
partir mieux
pour la guerre.*

Troubled by furious winds in March that blew
At twilight, blowing a small scared moon through
clouds,
Or by midsummer evenings confiding
Dew to your hair and coolness to your hands,
They made you meek avowals, whispering
Intimations of their disquietude.
They were like tuned instruments
Played on by fugitives.

For that war coming to them vouchsafed
This curious excellence to novices
For a tenderness, a thing to be conferred
As roses would be pinned by clumsy hands,
Therefore, maidens, did you receive them
Mysteriously among trees, and with kind mouths
Discreetly woo their phrases, remembering
Others once loved by other women,
Who went away.

Grieving for those, you whimpered after these:
"And shall we see them go, see others purge
The wounds like roses burning in their flesh,
Who die upon the verge, a day from home,
And never will return?"

*Mais les gars,
en suivant les
parfums des
femmes, ou-
blient la bien-
veillance des
vierges.*

And they survived your pity, having found
(After the days and nights, the mud in camps,
Silence intent on earth, sky, men, and trenches)
Wet evenings mingling on the boulevards
Laughter and talk, tobacco smoke and scents
Of perfumes and cosmetics warm from wraps:
Anonymous seductions, casual
And effortless to stroke the anxious pride
Stirring boys who shrink or smile,
Appraise, deliberate, confirm, among the songs
And voices in cafés.

*Et après, les
honteux par-
lent tout bas,
comme il faut
aux pleureu-
ses; et l'on en-
tend de petites
complaintes.*

From cinemas and porches you return
To reaffirm the gesture of romance,
So much the same to you until your fears,
Roused by a mood or quickened by a glance,
Appraise, deliberate, confirm, among the words
And pauses and replies:

"We gave you . . . something. You have
lost
Something!" (Like a flower dropped from a
coat)

And if they trembled when you cried
Against their shoulders, if their eyes
Met the disorder of your pride
With some confusion, some surprise,
The taste of such simplicities of grief
Upon your lips was mixed upon their kisses
Like bitterness in honey; whence they whimpered:
"We died upon the verge, a day from home,
And were born again; and how shall we forget?"



SIESTA. BY JULES PASCIN

Courtesy of the Brammer Gallery



THE BATH. BY JULES PASCIN

Courtesy of the Brummer Gallery

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GERMAN LETTER

Munich

May, 1923

FOR several weeks before and after the Christmas holidays the *chaise longue* next to my writing-desk was withdrawn from its natural purpose, since it was piled high with fresh printed matter, the evidence of our Christmas book mart. Our postman kept bringing in the packages day by day, so that I tried to recompense the man for his trouble by giving him a goodly selection of our surplus consignment. But since a proper place simply could not be found for all these books, they hindered me from taking that horizontal position which is frequently so salubrious. In Goethe's words: "*Hiess ich mir das doch eine Messe!*" Really, I was quite willing to renounce my comfort, through my delight with an abundance which, while it does bring with it much that is useless, testifies at any rate that there can be no talk of our hanging our heads here in Germany, in spite of the unfavourable conditions.

Novels, books of verse, year books, anthologies, monographs, critical essays, philosophic investigations of time and the universe, collections of historic letters, illustrated editions of classical authors—nothing was lacking. The masters were there, and the young men who imitate them, or who imitate one another, or who stand completely, absolutely, and absurdly alone—all of which also is amusing. The get-up of these books was often of high quality. I am not speaking of *de luxe* editions, artistically decorated *bibelots* which appear in limited issues, numbered and signed, and which experience has shown to be good business. These are soon in tight hands. But also the book intended for a large public displays as a rule an agreeable binding. Our impoverishment has not changed things much in this respect, even though the practice to-day usually is to get the effect by methods more modest than at the time of our economic flourishing. Since I was young (and was receiving the strongest literary impressions of my life through the little twenty-pfennig booklet) the taste of the German public's requirements in matters of bookbinding has been extraordinarily improved. And such cultural habits of a people will not easily deteriorate; they persist somehow, even under reduced economic circumstances. The

prices—now they are raised to take in the investment of the publisher and the middleman's need of a profit—the prices are colossal; during the last weeks, in fact, they have reached such a height that the consumers' strike has finally set in, and the sale of books, still in full swing around Christmas, is now at a standstill. It will right itself, in some way or another; after all, in a country like Germany the book is as much a necessity as anything else. It is not a luxury; a people with such an extensive educated class cannot dispense with it. But perhaps we still have to say good-bye to the "fine" book, return to the primitive forms of this industry, and bring to market our poets and thinkers, the old and the new, printed on wood-paper, like cheap pamphlets whose pages one never hesitates to dog-ear and to cut with a match. But books will always be turned out, and will always be bought. *Legere necesse est; vivere non est necesse.*

To be sure, certain vast and ambitious projects in the field of books are endangered for the present. The monumental edition of Nietzsche's complete works is indeed threatening to give way under economic difficulties. It was being undertaken by an enterprising institution in Munich, the Musarion-Verlag, in collaboration with the Weimarer Nietzsche-Archiv; it is appearing under the imprint of a publishing firm which was founded in Munich during the war and which carries the name of the great philosopher-lyricist on its letterheads. The work is splendidly gotten up, philologically accurate, and entirely complete; it is to comprise twenty-two volumes, and just now is halted at the sixth, while even this came to light with a certain painful slowness. It is to be feared that the stagnation which has begun will be permanent: the frightful drop in the exchange, the fabulously swollen costs of production, have made all calculations in advance impossible. Frankly, it is impossible to raise the sums which would be necessary to continue the enterprise.

Nietzsche's importance as a prophet and a guide for the future of mankind cannot be overestimated. And yet unfortunately—notably in Anglo-Saxon quarters—the most astounding misunderstandings of his value arose on the part of the vast public. The usual thing was to link together Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi—a grotesque cacophony for the ear of all intellectual Germans, and not of the Germans alone. One might conceivably name Treitschke and General von Bernhardi in one breath, although there was a great injustice to Treitschke in this. But it was ridiculous that Nietzsche should be brought in to complete the symbol of

German wickedness; and it remains ridiculous, even after one comes to understand how it was possible. The things responsible for this were his philosophy of power, his anti-Christianity (which he shared with Goethe, but which was less thoroughly grounded personally in his case) his enthusiastic glorification of aesthetic greatness, of the strong and the beautiful life. But to take this lyricism as a prophecy of militaristic industrialism means simply to understand neither the lyricism nor the industrialism. Are people not aware that he, above all others, hated and cursed the "Empire" for its poverty of philosophy and ideas? That he was the one who formed the concept of "good Europeanism," and fought against the obdurate notion of Pan-Germanism as the highest national tradition? Nietzsche stands at that point where the spirit of Greece meets the spirit of democracy as it reaches its expression in hymns through the medium of Walt Whitman; Walt Whitman when he exclaims "And if the body does not do so much as the Soul? And if the body were not the Soul, what is the Soul?"

That is the third realm of religious humanity, a new idea of man which is more than idea, is pathos and love: a true *educational* love which assures its standard-bearers—and Nietzsche also was one of these—the suffrage of an entire young generation. At the Entretiens d'Eté in Pontigny, French and Germans have agreed on the three minds which should be named as the awakeners and the builders, in both countries, of the present-day sense of values in living: Whitman, Nietzsche, and Dostoevsky. This was undoubtedly a more modest assembly than that other one, which was nothing but a testimony of the general stupidity caused by the war; and it will be a highly difficult task to point out any connexion between the Nietzsche-Gesellschaft and General von Bernhardt. (I am not certain whether he is still alive, the doughty old gentleman.) This company sees, as the prospectus states, "its principal task in the fostering of a completely unpolitical, but genuinely European spirit." The purpose is to assemble "under the name of Friedrich Nietzsche, the good Europeans of the present, this type of persons which are readily suspected in their own countries, but nevertheless embody in their present form the ideas of their nations." They live in all parts of the world. And we are soliciting members from all parts of the world—also for our committee, in which, if things go as we plan, in time each country outside of Germany will be represented by a member.

I mentioned Hugo von Hofmannsthal, a name well known to the readers of *THE DIAL*. Recently this spirited intellect has been making the world of thought further extraordinarily handsome and valuable contributions. Unfortunately I was prevented last summer from attending the splendid production in Salzburg of his reworking of Calderon's *The Grand World Theatre*. But I have read the poetry with positive astonishment in Hofmannsthal's magazine, *Neue Deutsche Beiträge*. The first number of this magazine appeared a short time ago. Its significance and emphasis are announced programmatically in a few sentences of the editor's foreword to the issue, sentences truly addressed to the nation. He says:

"But it amounts quite plainly and simply to this: that in a dark and adverse situation the intellectuals, through whom the general public finds its expression, should conduct themselves exactly as would befit the individual in such a situation. They should retain a modest deference to the European spiritual world, present and past in one, and a sturdy self-respect, without haughtiness, regardless of how fate may have placed them."

Very good! Very good! But as to *The Grand World Theatre*, this allegory of the inner life, this pious play with its brightness and its sternness—the thing which I marvel at most of all is the mixture of elements, some of them sublimely poetic, and some crude, lusty, folk-qualities. This mixture is unmannered and legitimate, but is natural only to that Catholic, Austrian, South-German sphere in which this poet is rooted. It is closed to us Protestants—closed, not in that we cannot enjoy such things, but in that we cannot produce them. Speaking in broad terms the "cultured" novel remains our province, even while it is no longer abreast of fashion and the times as a literary *genre*. The union of the folk elements with the sublime is a matter of a more southerly sky and a more socially-minded culture. It can hardly succeed with the pietistic introspection of the individualist, which is something to be envied. For what one cannot do, yes? that is art?

A further contribution of the Austrian poet which I absolutely must point out is his *Deutsches Lesebuch* (German Reader) which is issued by the Bremer Presse in Munich and is complete in two volumes. The first presents a selection of German prose masterpieces and extracts of the century from 1750 to 1850. This book

cannot be warmly enough recommended to foreigners who wish to read good German and at the same time lift themselves above the turmoils and arid misunderstandings of the day, to seek some contact with the higher, the eternal Germany. We too had our "great century": it was precisely that in which this prose is situated, from the advent of Lessing up to the *bourgeois* revolution. And if, as Hofmannsthal says, we are still not without friends in the world, it is because we are still living off the high opinion which was formed of the German intellectual calibre of those days. He says this in an introduction which, by its grace and dignity of expression, is on a par with the other contents of the volume. There are, for instance, such things as: the description of the actor Garrick by Lichtenberg and that of the torso in the Belvedere at Rome by Winckelmann; further, Goethe's essay on German architecture; a portion of Jung-Stilling's *Jugendgeschichte*; *Der Rheinfluss Bei Schaffhausen*, by Heinse; the incomparable study by Kleist on the puppet-show; fragments of Novalis, and much else besides. No political propaganda could be so effective abroad in defence of an excessively ill-treated people as this book; and I should be happy if these lines helped somewhat to smoothe its path through the world.

Shall I be permitted, on the other side of the ocean, to seek sympathy for the cosmopolitan outlook of a nation which, notwithstanding so strong a pressure from without, or even with the enemy inside its borders, still suffers no hardening or narrowing in things of the mind, but expresses its world-hunger in a varied offering of literature translated from all languages? Ah! At Christmas the evidences of this weighted down my ottoman to such an extent, that I was worried for the elasticity of its springs! There was the elegant five-volume edition of Diderot, from the Georg Müllersche Verlag in Munich; further, there were the highly presentable German versions of a whole row of works by Anatole France, gotten out by a firm I have mentioned above, the Musarion-Verlag; and there was no end of translations from the older and the modern Russian authors, which, as can be learned from the booksellers, are quite characteristically in especially great demand by our public.

A friend told me that on visiting André Gide in Paris recently, he found the French writer buried in the large German edition of

Dostoevsky's complete works—for there is no edition in French. But while France has discovered Dostoevsky in German, we have brought out Nikolai Lyesskov, a contemporary to the creator of *The Brothers Karamazov*, but overshadowed by him for a long time. But to-day he is recognized as a story-teller by God's grace, provided with a rare artistic power, and, in expressing the soul of the Russian people, quite the equal of the man who found his story, *The Sealed Angel*, worthy of an extensive discussion in *The Journal of an Author*. We are devouring Lyesskov. There is nothing in Europe to-day like his tremendous talent for story-telling. But the tradition lives on in the young generation of Russian writers, more than one member of which is now living in Germany. To my delight I recently had the opportunity in Berlin of meeting one and another representative of this poetic offshoot, Remizov for instance, and Count Alexei Tolstoy. They live there, refugees from the tyranny of the Reds, but homesick for the Little Mother, Russia. Meanwhile, they might well feel at home here, since their works, in the German versions of Alexander Eliasberg, have been received with the most eager sympathy.

Young Tolstoy, it is said, has obtained his great family name only through adoption, but as an artist he does it full honour. His novel, *The Road to Calvary*, is planned as the first part of a trilogy which is to lead epically through war and revolution to a brighter future; it is an unusually healthy and amiable work in which the plastic strength really does recall at times the old man of *Yasnaya Poliana*.

As to Alexei Remizov, he is an artist in folk-lore, loving the old-fashioned and the primitive to the point of eccentricity; as a result, even his handwriting, his signature, displays a crisp, old-Slavic turn. A new book by him is lying before me; it appeared in the Russian Library of the Munich *Drei-Masken Verlag*. It is called *Russian Women* and contains easily half a hundred short tales, stories, legendary anecdotes, mostly of a wild, ghostly character—things which the people like to tell in the evening around the stove; he has listened to them and heightened them with the license of love to the most expressive poetry.

I break off for the present. I must save up for a subsequent letter what I hope to be able to say about modern German fiction and the state of our theatre.

THOMAS MANN

BOOK REVIEWS

A SYNTHETIC MIND

THE LIFE OF REASON, or The Phases of Human Progress. By George Santayana. Volume I: INTRODUCTION AND REASON IN COMMON SENSE. Volume II: REASON IN SOCIETY. Volume III: REASON IN RELIGION. Volume IV: REASON IN ART. Volume V: REASON IN SCIENCE. 12mo. 1325 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. Each volume, \$2.

AFTER twenty years, Mr Santayana's *magnum opus*, The Life of Reason, has reached a second edition, differing from the first only by the addition of a characteristic preface. This new preface tells us that there is hardly a page which perfectly expresses the author's present feelings, but that he has not attempted a revision because "some readers would perhaps prefer the original to my revised version, and if I lived another twenty years I might myself prefer it." There has been, he says, "no change in my deliberate doctrine; only some changes of mental habit." The chief of these is that "Nature has come forward, and the life of reason, which then held the centre of the stage, has receded." One may surmise that this change is due to the war, which has certainly inclined most reflective minds to minimize the part of reason in human life, and has made human life itself appear more intimately a part of Nature than it did when we defined *homo* as *animal rationale*. This, however, is not said by Mr Santayana, and may be a false interpretation of his change of mood.

Mr Santayana is a philosopher whose importance has not been adequately recognized. Professors pass him by because he is not pedantic, and the general public because he does not flatter the prejudices of our age. It may be suspected, however, that his books will outlive those of many men who have had a greater contemporary vogue; this is probable just because his writing is not topical. He is not a "modern," in the sense in which the pragmatists are modern in university philosophy, or Mr H. G. Wells in popular thought. The intellectual background of our time is composed of

conflicting tendencies. First, there is the heritage of the romantic movement and the French Revolution; this leads to an extreme individualism, exemplified in contemporary art and in the philosophy of Nietzsche, as well as in much of German idealism. Secondly, there is the idea of evolution, originally in conflict with religion, but now reconciled to it; this idea leads to a disbelief in finality, whether in thought or in social systems, and to a mystical faith in "progress." Thirdly, there is physics and industrialism—the mind and body of the new world that is growing up independently of our conscious desires, creating a new organization and a new rigidity to replace those of the Middle Ages. The chaotic character of our world—in art, in thought, and in politics—is largely attributable to the conflict of industrialism (which has been in the main an instinctive growth) with the beliefs and ideals that we inherit from Rousseau and the romanticists.

Mr Santayana is aware of these modern forces, but as an observer, not as one who is subject to their operation. So far as his own tastes and interests are concerned, there are other periods in which he might have lived—seventeenth-century France, for example, or the age of Tacitus. His knowledge of the present is like other men's knowledge of the past, an external affair, lacking instinctive sympathy. I do not say this by way of criticism, since our age is destitute of some of the most important elements of human excellence. What these are, Mr Santayana endeavours to make us know in his urbane, uncontroversial manner. He loves, first and foremost, the Greeks, and among the Greeks especially Democritus and Plato. He admires the Roman Empire, and he cherishes an affection for the Catholic Church—without, of course, accepting its dogmas. He holds that the Latin races alone understand civilization, and that the best of the English and Germans are hardly more than inspired barbarians. I cannot recall any mention of Russian literature in his works, but I am convinced that if he were compelled to read Dostoevsky he would treat him even more scathingly than he has treated Browning and Walt Whitman; while what he would say of Tolstoy as a prophet may be inferred from what he says of Kant:

"The 'categorical imperative' was a shadow of the ten commandments; the postulates of practical reason were the minimal tenets of

the most abstract Protestantism. These fossils, found unaccountably embedded in the old man's mind, he regarded as the evidences of an inward but supernatural revelation."

Mr Santayana is a believer in physical science, and in a sense a materialist. But he holds these doctrines, not as moderns do, but as Lucretius did. If I had not read what he says about Epicurus, I should be tempted to call him an Epicurean; certainly he would have felt at home with those aristocratic Ghibelline Epicureans of whom Dante found such attractive specimens in Hell. He would not feel at home with Einstein, because relativity disintegrates matter into a flux of events, and seems to destroy its solidity and power. He loves solidity perhaps more than any other quality; he would like our beliefs, our social systems, and the external world to have as far as possible the character of Roman architecture. In our age, such things as railways, sky-scrapers, and the Assouan dam have something of this Roman quality, but our thought, as yet, has none of it. It may be suspected that if, in time, our ideas become again as rigid as an iron building, they will not take a form which would please Mr Santayana, because they will not be mellow with age. He likes the rock to be overgrown with moss, concealing its alarming immovability beneath a veil of softness. He loves the pieties and myths that gather about ancient tradition, and it is doubtful whether he could ever like anything radically new. But it is time to turn from his tastes to his beliefs—which, however, like those of most good writers, are an embodiment of temperament, and can hardly be appreciated without some understanding of his likes and dislikes.

Mr Santayana's philosophy is at once ethical and naturalistic. He views man as an animal plunged into a given environment, and endowed with a variety of tastes and impulses. "Reason" consists in taking account of our whole nature, and also of our environment as revealed by science, and endeavouring to produce the greatest attainable harmony, both inwardly and outwardly. This involves a certain humility, and also a certain capacity of renunciation. He hates those who, like Fichte, essentially deny that we have any environment, and think that our own ego is all that we have to consider. He hates also those who, like the romantics, admire an impulse for its strength and passion, and not for its power of con-

tributing to life as a whole. He takes pleasure in the limitations to individual power, and even to collective human power, because they are indications of a wider order, a possibility of a more enlarged cosmos. Every impulse is in itself good, but it becomes contrary to the life of reason when it is allowed to defeat the satisfaction of other impulses which have equal rights. In his *Life of Reason* he traces out the harmonious development of human nature in the successive fields of common sense, society, religion, art, and science. On all of these, he says many illuminating things, but most readers will derive the greatest pleasure from his occasional trenchant criticisms of current forms of unreason.

There is in all his writing an extraordinary aptitude for producing *le mot juste* about whatever topic he is discussing. For this reason, as well as on account of his admirable style, he lends himself to the method of selection, employed by Mr Pearsall Smith in *Little Essays, Drawn from the Writings of George Santayana*. In some ways, his merits are more apparent in this form than in his complete works; for, while all his writing is good in detail, one cannot but feel something lacking in the whole. What it is that is lacking, it is not easy to say. His mind is synthetic rather than analytic, and synthesis, nowadays, is only possible by a certain wilful blindness. Whatever synthesis is suggested, something is known which contradicts it. Moreover, every synthesis, once accepted, becomes a mental prison; the pleasure of synthesis is so great that its votaries fight against everything that would destroy it. Reason has its place in life, but that place is, perhaps, not paramount. If our reason were divine, we could worship it and let it rule us; but it is human, and liable to err. To respect it unduly is to retard progress, even intellectual progress. Perhaps it is on this account that the reader feels no very ardent desire to live Mr Santayana's reasonable life; perhaps it is for reasons that have more to do with the old Adam. Which it is, I cannot tell; but the feeling persists in spite of all his admonitions that it is well to become what he would call a "humble animal."

BERTRAND RUSSELL

GERMAN SYMBOLISM

DEMIAN. By Hermann Hesse. Translated from the German by N. H. Priday. 12mo. 215 pages. Boni and Liveright. \$2.

DEMIAN is a disorderly and unconvincing piece of fiction. It is a symbolical attempt to reconcile the imaginative aggressiveness of the Nietzschean will with the sacrificial tolerance of Christianity—in other words, the conflict of two moralities. The book is compounded of strange things: apocalyptic visions, remote philosophies from the cabbala, and dreams interpreted in the modern method of Freud. This is dangerous stuff for the making of novels, and particularly dangerous here, since the author uses his materials to exemplify psychological truth and not as accessories to dramatic emphasis. Despite the carefully selected incidents and a background drawn with unusual honesty and considerable skill, the characters remain abstractions. One and all are bloodless creatures, empty of all reality, and suggestive of the studio-conceptions of Poe. But Poe was a thoroughly consistent workman; his characters are devoid of human warmth and corporeality, but they are, to the last degree, appropriate to their limited world; Hesse endeavours to enliven a realistic skeleton by imposing mystic ideas upon it; he gives us moods and incredible episodes; and unable to devise a satisfactory conclusion, brings in the great war as an instrument of divine light, and then suddenly stops.

In one sense, of course, all art is symbolical. In reading Don Quixote we are sharply conscious of our own extravagances, of our reckless efforts to escape the oppressions of life by plunging headlong into romantic folly. Hence the universal appeal of the book. But within recent years the robust sanity of great art has been cast aside for a symbolism of a very narrow order. Painting has been scourged by vapid abstractions, and by expressionists seeking to portray obscure and incommunicable states of the soul; literature has been invaded by neurotics, and by precocious intellectuals who would rather be damned with James Joyce than write anything so banal as to stir the sensibilities into a decent human emotion. Hesse

is a penetrating critic; he is evidently familiar with the psychology of the unconscious mind; he yearns religiously to escape the bonds of materiality; but his novel is little more than a record of the behaviour of a few emblems of abnormality.

Let us examine briefly the character of the symbols. Demian, the principal adumbration, bears the mark of Cain, a sign of intellectual superiority—this super-youth knows all the secrets of heaven and earth by magical intuition, and is subject to catalepsy; his mother, or mistress—the author is not clear on this point—is a sort of Rosicrucian goddess; Sinclair, friend to Demian and narrator of the story, is a blundering student who drifts from bad to worse, falls in with Pistorius, a musical necromancer beaten at his own game, rises again to a shadowy communion with the occult powers, and at length meets his affinity in Demian's mother, or mistress. I doubt if Mr Yeats himself would accept the account of Sinclair's artistry: unconsciously and with practically no training the student paints a beautiful water-colour, an androgynous creation resembling at first his beneficent genius Demian, and later on Demian's consort. There is no end of dreams, and the dreams are subtle and elaborate; there are fire demons and sacred hawks, mysteries and desires—and then, happily, the war.

The elements just enumerated are enough to kill the book for readers who demand intelligible human experience as the basis of a novel; who admit the author's right to mould his characters as he pleases, to strengthen their fibre and magnify their actions to a terrifying limit, provided these departures from the normal are directly referable to the fundamental operations of the spirit. But to the neurotics, spiritualists, and cosmic wiseacres, Demian will have a large and, I dare say, perspicuous appeal.

In justice to Hesse it must be said that Demian contains isolated passages of genuine beauty, and that notwithstanding its cryptic allusions and vagaries, it is a relief to Americans who are tired of mechanical ingenuity and the meanness of small towns. The fault is mainly one of medium—the book has simply no vitality as fiction. Hesse has contributed psychologically to the revolt against the curse of materialism; occasionally his novel lifts us above the curse, and that, in itself, is something of an achievement.

THOMAS CRAVEN

RECONSTRUCTING MISS AUSTEN

THE WATSONS. *By Jane Austen. Concluded by L. Oulton. 12mo. 211 pages. D. Appleton and Co. \$1.75.*

JANE AUSTEN'S fragment, *The Watsons*, first published some time ago in her collected works, has now been brought out separately with a conclusion by somebody else. As it has been complained that there is no indication of where Miss Austen leaves off and Miss Oulton begins, it may be worth while to put on record that Miss Austen's last words are the three lines at the top of page 104.

Not that the change wouldn't soon be noticeable in any case. Miss Oulton does not delay to sink. It would be absurd to blame her seriously for not succeeding, as not even a great artist could complete a great artist's work; but it does seem to me that she has left the suture a little more glaring than it need have been by abandoning not perhaps the style of her author, but the characteristic features of her technique. Her continuation is interesting because it heightens our sense of what Miss Austen's method actually was.

In the first place, Miss Austen was in the habit of developing her action in a series of elaborate episodes and scenes—rather in the manner of Henry James. It is not surprising that Miss Oulton cannot keep this up—for it would require an extraordinary dramatic genius to do so—the genius which Miss Austen possessed to such an amazing degree. *The Watsons* itself supplies an example of this of a kind to bring despair not only to Miss Oulton, but also, I should think, to almost any other writer. Miss Austen brings her heroine, a by no means dazzling girl, to a small dance in a provincial town; before she arrives she has been told a little of some of the people whom she is to meet there. Yet by the time the reader has arrived at the door of that prosaic "assembly room" he is almost as much excited about the ball as the young lady is supposed to be herself. No adventure in a tale of mystery could be more thrillingly prepared. We watch the coming and goings of the dancers like the auguries of some tremendous drama. In their gestures we half read the signs of a complete world just beyond our ken.

But, what is less venial, Miss Oulton has altogether disregarded Miss Austen's manner of focussing her material. In general, Miss Austen—like James again—ordinarily soaked her story in a single temperament: the central character in the complex of relations supplies the eyes through which all the others are seen. The kind of personality possessed by the heroine determines the kind of interest to be derived from the events. Now Miss Oulton abandons the limited point of view which makes the "assembly," for example, exciting. The circumstances which surround Emma Watson are interesting because we do not know too much about them; but Miss Oulton, as soon as she has launched forth, will be telling us at once what everybody is up to. She even begins switching back and forth, as Miss Austen would surely never do, between different groups of characters—some in England, some in Italy!

Incidentally, it is in this question of the central personality that I believe the real reason is probably to be found for Jane Austen's never finishing *The Watsons*—not, as Mr Austen Leigh suggests in the preface, like one of his great-aunt's own pompous snobs, because "the author became aware of the evil of having placed her heroine too low, in such a position of poverty and obscurity as, though not necessarily connected with vulgarity, has a sad tendency to degenerate into it." I cannot believe it was her obscure situation which discouraged Miss Austen with *Emma Watson*. Fanny Price, in *Mansfield Park*, reaches a *milieu* far more ignoble than anything possible for *Emma Watson*. It must rather have been her paleness and tameness which allowed Jane Austen to drop her fortunes. In *Pride and Prejudice* we have a finely sensible heroine who sets the tune of the story by her tact; in *Mansfield Park* we have a girl so submissive that her very humility gives the book a positive colour; in *Northanger Abbey* the whole action takes its point from the delusions of a young romantic. But it is a little difficult, in *The Watsons*, to see what value *Emma Watson* could have had. She seems to come nearer to the conventional modest heroine than it was Miss Austen's habit to invent. She seems built for no more interesting fate than to triumph through virtue over the pretentious and the proud; and it is no doubt the somewhat narrowly correct quality of this virtue which persuaded her creator to extinguish her.

Yet though Miss Austen's indications plainly point to the happy ending which Miss Oulton fills in, I cannot believe that Miss Aus-

ten would have arrived at it with quite the ease which Miss Oulton permits herself. Though Miss Austen brought her novels to a close with the conventional happy ending of the time, it is a happy ending which we never feel is anything more than a convention. Miss Oulton's good characters are completely good and the characters which Miss Austen has made disagreeable become suddenly rather amiable people as soon as Miss Austen has left the room. But in Miss Austen life is not so easy as this; moral values are not so simple. No other novelist has ever been more ruthless than was Miss Austen, within her convention. Not Shakespeare; not Racine. As we read we are sometimes abashed as by the sight of life itself; we smile, but we are troubled as we smile. The narrow stage proves yet as deep as the inexplicable laws of human fate; and the prim figures of the county, as we watch them, take on the seriousness which arrests us in any intense and clear-headed vision of human life.

EDMUND WILSON, JR.

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE

BLACK ARMOUR. By Elinor Wylie. 12mo. 77 pages.
George H. Doran Company. \$1.50.

FANTASY is the quality of an agile mind working freely, as if in a vacuum. It consists in the unexpected combination of ideas and images so as to create a world apart from the world, governed by a more arbitrary logic. The poems of Elinor Wylie, at any rate the best of them, have fantasy. They share the quality with T. S. Eliot, and reading *Black Armour* for the first time one is reminded of him forcibly.

But of which Eliot . . . the question is legitimate; he is never quite the same; he changes his style to keep pace with the continued development of his ideas. An author who depends on the sole resources of his own temperament (take Sherwood Anderson for example) is perfectly consistent with his own temperament; he changes rarely. There is an opposite type, that of Apollinaire or Picasso: intellectual artists, perfectly conscious, who gather information wherever they can find it and imitate anybody except themselves. They move from one theory to another, emitting disciples like sparks as they pass through each stage: the disciples have separate relations to the master and are usually one another's enemies. Eliot is an artist, a master, of this type.

As in the case of Picasso, where Pink and Blue and Classical eras are distinguished, one can name the eras of Eliot: for example the period of the early realistic poems, the Prufrock stage, the quatrains about Sweeney, Gerontion, *The Waste Land*. Each era has a separate influence whose history can be traced; *Black Armour* belongs in great part to the history of the quatrains. Remembering Burbank in Venice one reads:

"Castilian facing Lucifer,
Juan does not remove his cap;
Unswaddled infantile to her
His soul lies kicking in her lap.

While she, transported by the wind
 Mercutio has clasped and kissed . . .
 Like quicksilver, her absent mind
 Evades them both, and is not missed."

In these two stanzas her qualities are evident. A poem by Elinor Wylie is the quick notation of a guess, a situation, a metaphor; it contains a bit of drama, rarely a narrative, often a character drawn briefly, but not hastily. Her metre is like Eliot's; her images have a similar air of being jumbled together, with deliberation; her vocabulary, though not the same, is parallel and includes strange words, words out of history and science, words used for their own sake, but exactly, with a parade of erudition which is justified in the fact. *Alarums* rhymes with *bar-rooms* and *sentient* with *bent*; *Apeneck Sweeney* nods his maculate head in approval.

But the resemblance to Eliot is more on the surface than beneath, and when Miss Wylie uses the same dictionary and the same metrics she uses them to her own purpose. She has a personality which is in many ways his opposite. He is afraid of intimate emotions, hides them politely, holds them at arm's length when he wishes to describe them; she is both emotional and intimate, as if her subject were a penny world to eat with Pippit behind the screen.

She writes in a medium which Eliot never attempted: magazine verse. Literature takes curious forms and magazine verse is one of them. It is bound by conventions as rigid, perhaps, as those of Racinian tragedy or the Noh drama; the perspective of a century will be needed to appreciate how they are narrow. Magazine verse must fill the bottom of a page, agreeably. It is limited to certain subjects treated with a certain degree of lyricism; to emotions neither too personal nor impersonal and to a few stanzas in a minor tradition. Apparently these conventions should prevent the writing of even passable verse, but talent thrives on conventions. Miss Wylie is talented.

She writes genuine poetry while observing even the minor conventions of her medium. For example it is the general consent that human bodies are composed of breast, hands, head. *Black Armour* is in five sections to cover them: breastplate, gauntlet, helmet, beaver (*Beaver Up!*) and plumes. The legs are left unprotected

through delicacy, or they are lacking. And nevertheless *Black Armour* gives no sense of being incomplete; within limitations it is unexcelled. The verse is hard and bright as a piece of machinery; there are no loose screws about it; metres are varied with astonishing skill. Miss Wylie is a craftsman who cannot be praised too highly, but her real achievement is to write magazine verse which is not repulsive to the intelligence. I doubt whether any one else has done as much.

Only, you form such a high opinion of her talents that you expect too much of them, saying to yourself: The last poem was agreeable, but the next will be a masterpiece . . . or surely the one after. At the end of the book you are left still unsatisfied, still expecting another something which will come, perhaps, in a future volume. The feeling is not disagreeable. Sometimes you wish she would write in other conventions, more ambitious, complete anatomically, giving more scope to her notations of character and her dramatic power. As it is, she never lacks charm and only at her worst is she cute.

Apparently her greatest virtue should be the fact that she combines, in wise proportions, intellect with emotion. It is a defect instead, perhaps her gravest, for although she combines them in a book she has fused them perfectly in no single poem. She has emotion and fantasy by turns. She thinks in one poem and thinks well; feels in one poem and feels strongly; allows thought and feeling to be separate. She is the Owl and the lyric Nightingale at sea in a beautiful pea-green boat; during the honeymoon they write verses dedicated to each other, but obviously by two authors.

It is the Owl who is more modern. . . . There is a group of phenomena in contemporary letters, which, if taken together, are the elements of a movement perhaps important enough to be compared with the classicism of the seventeenth century or the romanticism of the nineteenth. Different aspects of the movement have been referred to as cubist, neo-classical, abstract, fantastic, but the one term which includes all its tendencies is Intellectualism. The decade, perhaps the century will be intellectualist. . . . Miss Wylie, with her double personality, is half in the movement and half outside of it. In a way this is a judgement, for although it is no virtue to be modern, none to be conservative, there is a difficult virtue in extremes.

MALCOLM COWLEY

MACHEN IN RETROSPECT

THINGS NEAR AND FAR. 12mo. 250 pages. \$2. THE HOUSE OF SOULS. THE SECRET GLORY. FAR OFF THINGS. THE HILL OF DREAMS. HIEROGLYPHICS. By Arthur Machen. Published by Alfred A. Knopf.

PAN—the Pan of what, in one's innocence, one used to call the *fin-de-siècle*—died hard. But he did die: and was securely buried, very deep beneath a headstone embellished with a design of a somewhat post-Beardsley school. Since when, as examination of the Georgian poets will demonstrate, he never stirred; and in the very woodlands where, in the not so very distant 'nineties, his shadow had evoked a nameless terror, finches, thrushes, and even nightingales warbled sweetly again. . . . Pursue these wistful thoughts a little, and then reflect how sharp a surprise it must have been for Arthur Machen, of late years, to find himself becoming slowly but surely the object of a cult. Minor, if you like, but still a cult.

Machen seemed so definitely to have faded away. For since 1902, when Hieroglyphics appeared, the chief public recognition of his literary powers had been shewn by the late Viscount Northcliffe, who used him until 1921, with the almost uncanny perspicacity of a captain of industry, as a reporter on the London Evening News. For several years Machen, a man who had certainly ventured into some very curious hinterlands of the human soul and probably come very near to meeting Pan face to face, was thus enabled to run around the town accumulating fragments of insane information for those quite touchingly ephemeral columns, interviewing Personages in theatres and West-end hotels, writing up the usual stories to order—a specialist, I conjecture, in the warm little gusts of religious emotion stirred in the readers of the "late finals" by a celebrated death or a really military funeral. It was a murky disappearance. He only emerged as a visible character again on that memorable occasion in 1915 when, having invented in a short story the highly popular Angels of Mons, he found to his alarm that his creatures were rapidly becoming an accepted piece of the history

of British strategy, and that no right-thinking clergyman would believe that they were only the angels of a Mr Arthur Machen. In 1907, it is true, *The Hill of Dreams*, written ten years before, had appeared: but the mode was aging and no one had paid very much attention. And with the passing of a few more years a good many people, even among the erudite in such things, must have thought that the author of *The Great God Pan*, like most of the "Keynotes" celebrities, was either dead or stricken vengefully dumb. And then, somehow or other, perhaps by the intervention of those angels, signs of a resurrection began to multiply. Mr Vincent Starrett, for instance, arose and proclaimed him to be the "Novelist of Ecstasy and Sin." Before long, collectors would find his name, in their catalogues of "modern firsts," appearing just before that of Masefield. A sixty-page bibliography, with introduction and notes (these last extremely amusing, by the way) and costing fifteen shillings, was published. The late Peter Whiffle, nothing if not a litmus to test the elegances of the 'twenties, sat in Stuyvesant Square and talked Machen continuously through five of Mr Van Vechten's pages, in such an ecstasy of dreadful delight as even his subject has never quite attained. And 1923 brings a uniform and collected edition of his work in England.

Things Near And Far really contains the core of most of Machen's creative writing. This second volume of his autobiography (if the term is not too strict for an agreeably mazy monologue) covers the years between 1884 and 1901, during which he accomplished most of that imaginative work. And I incline to think that this meditation and self-portraiture is in many ways an indispensable gloss on his novels and tales of the occult. Machen set out to depict certain recondite states of the soul which are probably impossible to define, certainly intensely difficult even to indicate: the symbols are wavering and uncertain, now too vague, now too esoteric. But manifestly his stories (the best of them) were born of his own experience of the Hidden Country. They had been written out of so long a travail, and with such painstaking valuation of words, that they were obviously not just the glorified "shockers" they were often mistaken for. Yet the fact remains that when Machen writes (as here) directly of himself, of the actual houses he has lived in, of the actual adventures of his own youth, of the

actual horrors of his own solitude, he writes with far more ease, and he carries a correspondingly greater conviction, than when he transposed these experiences, whether in the seen or the unseeable worlds, into fiction.

Look, for instance, at a highly characteristic work, *The Hill of Dreams*. Here he set out to write, as he says himself, "a Robinson Crusoe of the mind . . . to represent loneliness not of the body on a desert island, but loneliness of the soul and mind and spirit in the midst of myriads and myriads of men." The story, in effect, is Machen's imaginative summing-up of the years which he now returns to describe more or less objectively in *Things Near And Far*. The woods and valleys of Gwent and the ghosts of Isca Silurum, the torture of a barren endeavour in letters, poverty and the abominable wilderness of the London of dim boarding-houses, the *Ars Magna* of the city and the exploration of obscure streets in search of the unutterable Mystery which he knows they hold, the loneliness of crowds tightening about him—the two books are fashioned from the same material. But the Lucian Taylor of the novel is a tediously laboured manipulation of character in comparison with this mature, coolly reticent narrative of the same (or similar) happenings. Lucian never emerges altogether solid and three-dimensioned from the page: he has something of the remote and disembodied quality of a "case" in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. That adolescent misanthropy of his is irksome. The girding at stupid schoolboys, frumpish relatives, "impossible people" in general, grows tiresome. The satiric touch is often strangely amateurish. And all this weakens the tremendous force of Lucian's story. But take this volume and its predecessor, *Far Off Things*, and turn back to *The Hill of Dreams* with the living Machen in your mind to sharpen the outlines of Lucian. The whole story is somehow quickened with a new vitality that transcends the irritating flaws in the telling. The smouldering glow burns suddenly up. It is as if an actor of genius had taken over a part from a stiff and puzzled beginner.

Sentimentality? It was all true, then? Here is Mr Machen himself telling us so . . . If only we had known . . . No, admittedly the artist has no earthly right to count on a retrospective aid like this. And Machen, of course, has nowhere asked

for it. But the measure of Machen's success in these self-explanatory books is in a way a measure of his failure in earlier ones. The pity is that it is only in these late works that he has found an expression so free and adequate. His first matrix was fashioned after a pattern of Rabelais, Marguerite of Navarre, Béroalde de Verville; later came a congenial fluency in a Stevensonian manner; from this he deliberately broke away after 1895 in search of an authentic style. But only now does he seem to have found his way into an easy, unshackled, uninhibited speech. It may be, perhaps, that only now has he come into a settled tranquillity of the soul. Such things come late: and this is the book of a man who knows it.

HAMISH MILES

BRIEFER MENTION

EARLHAM, by Percy Lubbock (12mo, 254 pages; Scribner: \$3) is a reflection of precisely the type of intellect which, in the same author's *The Craft of Fiction*, laid its choicest gifts on the shrine of Henry James. Here is probably the most searching, as it is certainly one of the most artistic, representations of the life of an English country house which has found its way between book covers. Nothing is wasted in this delicate recital; one gets the colour and the feel of an exquisite civilization, where tradition is lifted to a poetic significance and where the influence of environment, instead of being a force of dwindling importance, becomes the mainspring of inspiration. Mr Lubbock is a master of portraiture, and he has conjured out of the past a miniature—deft and sympathetic, and in the full sense of the word, beautiful.

LADY INTO FOX, by David Garnett (12mo, 97 pages; Knopf: \$1.50) presents a supernatural event, the sudden metamorphosis of a lady into a fox, in nineteenth century England, under the eyes of her husband. The illusion of reality is perfectly maintained, the details of the effect of the change upon a correct English country household, the gradual change in the lady's character to fit her new form, are admirably worked out. And quite apart from the lady's side of it, the sympathetic handling of the unfortunate husband's dilemma is excellent.

IMPROMPTU, by Elliot Paul (12mo, 356 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) is a ghastly book on a Dostoevsky model, vivid, bitter, and foredoomed to swift obscurity on several counts. It is written in impressionist fashion with considerable technical power. There are some facets of reality about it, and as a study of certain pathological cases and types it ought to be valuable. It is the story of a boy with a yellow streak which widens with the sordid and terrible experiences he undergoes, until murder for an end he has not the nerve to carry through, closes his active career. The heroine is a moron who gravitates into the profession best fitted for her. And there *Impromptu* ends, as a nightmare fades. Elliot Paul ought to write something really fine when he finds his own manner, and learns to interpret the details which he can so vividly select.

THE SEVEN AGES OF WOMAN, by Compton Mackenzie (12mo, 315 pages; Stokes: \$2). Mr Mackenzie shows us a child born of a romantic love to young, normal, healthy parents going through life without passion, without friendship, too bloodless for tragedy, without intellectual enthusiasms, gossip, malice, or generosity, and calls it *Woman*. The book seems to derive from a drowsy after-dinner remembrance of *The Old Wives' Tale*. But it does not confine itself to an emaciated imitation of Bennett. When the lower middle class is in question Dickens is liberally drawn upon. In short it is a thoroughly literary production, a pale shadow of a shadow. Its veins run printer's ink.

BLACKGUARD, by Maxwell Bodenheim (12mo, 215 pages; Covici-McGee: \$2) is a book that loses by contrast with another recent novel with the same theme and something of the same bias, to wit, Craven's *Paint*. Both books assume that, as the latter author aptly phrases it, the artist in the modern world is, like the prostitute, a parasite upon society. The difference is that whereas Craven's hero accepts his destiny with a kind of simple hardihood, Bodenheim's blackguard is a weakling who derives a sense of achievement as much from a clever sneer as from a well-made poem. The novel is rich in excellent epigram and has a few entertaining portraits, but is chiefly important as something for Maxwell Bodenheim to put behind him.

SECRET DRAMA, by Isabel Beaumont (12mo, 316 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2) is really an exceptional novel in spite of the fact that it was awarded the Melrose £250 first-novel prize in London. Miss Beaumont has an able pen and a still abler intuition which permits her to get under the skin of her sisters. Her portrait of the contemporary *femme savante* is lucid and merciless, her attitude cool and detached, her emotion restrained, but not sterile. She is fully aware of the inevitable tragic strain in the truly comic situation. May Sinclair will have to look to her laurels.

The substitution of unremarkable snobbisms for thought in **BLACK OXEN**, by Gertrude Atherton (12mo, 346 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2) produces a triple breakdown. First, the wires of the suspense-pattern are left untightened and ungilt, and the crude secret of the loose mystery peeks beyond the frame at every moment. Second, the portrait of fashionable and literary New York is fatally crippled by the provincial assumptions of a social climber and the equally provincial assumption that the "Algonquins" constitute the bright centre of American intelligence. Third, one can accept the bodily rejuvenation of Madame Zattiany, but it is hard to discover an old cagey mind in her—"the most subtle, complex, and fascinating woman in Europe . . . abominably disillusioned." Mrs Atherton, however, gives her favourite no opportunity to display her reputed genius for politics, but does exhibit her admiring the mind of a newspaper columnist and admitting that the novel *Main Street* is Greek to her. Like those of *Main Street*, the imperfections of *Black Oxen* are of that golden sort that insures a democratic success.

AMERICAN BALLADS AND SONGS, collected and edited by Louise Pound (16mo, 266 pages; Scribner: \$1). It is a mistake to believe that American folk-songs are disappearing; the only sort to die is that type of imported European ballad which students have been taught to record. If Sweet William is forgotten with his Lady Margaret, Frankie and Johnnie survive. Most of our interesting folk-songs of the present are sea chanties, or obscene, or just blues. Miss Pound's anthology includes none of these types. She would be the first to admit that it smells more of the library than the forecandle or the barber shop, but it loses the best of its material thereby. She has done well with what remains.

SAMPHIRE, by John Cowper Powys (16mo, 53 pages; Seltzer: \$1) is a book of twenty poems in a jargon worthy of Ossian or Monk Lewis, with mysterious castles, haunted woods, trolls, and a personal Devil. A bit of cosmos is thrown in for good measure, while the metre limps and staggers as if drunken with Immensities. . . . Samphire is also an aromatic cliff plant used in making pickles.

ORIOLES AND BLACKBIRDS, by Hi Simons (12mo, 71 pages; Will Ransom) is a first volume of verse, in rhythms hardly more than the rhythms of prose. The virtue of its best poems is to be outspoken; the vice of the others is decoration in old patterns. It promises well and that is its main achievement.

ROAST LEVIATHAN, by Louis Untermeyer (12mo, 143 pages; Harcourt Brace: \$1.75) is not, as its author seems to think, compact of "that strange blend of irony and imagery" which constitutes for him the literary heritage of the Jews. It is rather a stranger blend of authenticity and pose, of naïve self-glorification and essential fire. Even in the foreword the old distressing note of puerile braggadocio recurs. Such poems as *He Goads Himself* and *Lenox Avenue Express* are merely a facile restatement of a theme which Louis Untermeyer should never have attempted. Another false note is struck when the poet claims that such a piece as *Boy and Tadpoles* reflects the "ironism and Semitic fantasy" peculiar to his race. There is nothing obviously Semitic about Stephen Benét's analagous *Portrait of a Boy*. Putting these irritations aside, what one finds in this volume is a greater strength, a finer sensitivity, a richer content than was discoverable in the author's previous books. There is a good deal of obvious influence, perhaps inevitable to so inveterate a parodist, but on the whole a firmer grasp on his material and more interesting stuff between his fingers.

THE THINKER, by Stanton A. Coblenz (16mo, 112 pages; White: \$1.50) is commonplace and honest. "In seeking," Mr Coblenz says, "to subject the truth to the vivid light of poetry, I have striven to avoid the cold rays of didacticism; in most cases I have essayed to temper my thoughts with the solvent of imagination or of a transforming emotion; and in every instance I have endeavoured to present ideas only as moulded and given effect and direction through the channels of art."

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM HAZLITT, by P. P. Howe (illus., 8vo, 476 pages; Doran: \$6). Despite—rather than because of—a vast and painstakingly collected mass of evidence, the character of William Hazlitt, critic, painter, essayist, lifts magnetically from the pages of this book—irritable, morose, sometimes washed with the "waters of bitterness," yet always splendidly and cragily significant. The author has made untiring search through this period and has collected every slight documentary straw which indicates the wind of the times and Hazlitt's relation to them. As a research student he has made this book a faithful and exhaustive repository rather than a constructive living portrait.

LETTERS AND PAPERS OF JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS, collected and edited by Horatio F. Brown (12mo, 280 pages; Scribner: \$3.50) are alone sufficient to establish their author as one of the few reliable coeval touchstones for the literary production of Victorian England. Symonds's reservations on Tennyson, Browning, and Stevenson are the starting-points for the adverse judgements of these one-time heroes by a later generation. Painfully cognizant of the destruction by science of the old stabilities of consciousness, he foresaw our contemporary task, the creation of a new synthesis of consciousness, and therefore he responded promptly and warmly to Walt Whitman. He was, however, impotent to construct his life upon Whitman; his sighing is excessive; three years before his death he wrote: "I am reconciled to literature and study as *palliatives*. I do not believe in them as substantial factors in life. Only when I am in fairly good spirits do they amuse me and help me to pass the time."

A BOOK ABOUT MYSELF, by Theodore Dreiser (8vo, 502 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3.50) recounts the throes of the author's early twenties in humourless apostrophes, with a redundancy that reveals his childish belief in their importance. One grows impatient, but remains indulgent. For the sluggish movement of the book, like that of his novels, is a motion powerful with life-force: Dreiser never writes from second-hand knowledge, but only of what he himself has seen and heard, and as a consequence felt. He feels deeply; too deeply to seem quite mature intellectually. This may be just as well when he is purely the creative artist; when, however, he is reviewing his own life in the capacity of interpreter and, ideally at least, of critic, it is decidedly detrimental.

JOSEPH CONRAD: His Romantic-Realism, by Ruth M. Stauffer (12mo, 122 pages; Four Seas: \$2.50) is a conscientious attempt to encompass the technic of Conrad, which fails, as most criticism fails, by mistaking properties for essences. The author's definitions of romanticism and realism are pre-Eliot, and the hypothetical romantic-realistic *genre* she declares Conrad has created is invalidated by her superficial distinctions. Confronted by technical functions, she sees only "symbols," or a representation of life's *post facto* unravellings for the sake of verisimilitude. The method is strictly classroom: comments on plots, characters, and settings in a vague, trade-marked prose of zero candle power. The bibliography is thorough.

FIFTY-ONE YEARS OF VICTORIAN LIFE, by the Dowager Countess of Jersey (8vo, 392 pages; Dutton: \$7) might well be used, by one so minded, to prove the high standard of morals and manners of half a century ago and its subsequent deterioration. For the author possesses just those qualities glaringly lacking in the lady-writers of the following generation: an unruffled acceptance of events in her life; a moulding of her emotions to conform with an ideal; reserve, loyalty, and an unobtrusive sense of humour. The book is well fortified with these admirable traits; literary interest it has none, nor does it pretend to have: it is an attempt at communication, not at art.

THE THEATRE

THE American version of *LE COMÉDIEN*—produced by Mr Belasco—is another proof that the Guitry plays without the Guitrys never quite come off. This seems to be especially true of the plays written for the elder Guitry: they contain a larger admixture of seriousness, and straight drama is not Sacha's best vein. Lucien Guitry—who is a great actor—can make any rôle extraordinary, but when one of these plays is presented without him, it is seen to be a flimsy scaffolding from which the chief reality has been removed. Yet it is the vehicle built for the more powerful of the Guitrys—and to which he is in the habit of supplying the power himself—that we seem usually to get. And even the plays which are still mainly ironic tend on our stage to become straight romantic comedies. *THE GRAND DUKE I KNOW*, and *THE COMEDIAN* I suspect, to have been written largely in a spirit of high farce verging almost on the Gilbert and Sullivan. But where Sacha has written and Lucien played an objective comic figure of an actor or a Grand Duke, Lionel Atwill gives us an old-fashioned leading man who would be more at home in the drawing-rooms of Pinero than in the sophisticated comedy of the French. It is irony which makes Guitry amusing. Robbed of irony, he usually becomes banal.

It is in the plays which Sacha writes primarily for himself that this irony appears in its purest form and in which his genius finds its happiest expression. They have at worst a kind of decorous silliness reminiscent of William Collier, whom the younger Guitry in some ways suggests. (He has the same slight habitual air of embarrassment in situations which are always just a little too much for him—or in which it is become more and more difficult for him to conceal that he is a flagrant impostor. I remember a play in which, when someone asks him what he got out of going to Aix-les-Bains, he replies, "*Beaucoup de ben*," and then adds hastily in his earnest worried way, "*heu . . . je veux dire, beaucoup de bien*"—which is pure Collier.) But beyond this vein of polite gagging, he is capable of a rather high comedy. The scenes which he writes for himself and his wife are masterpieces of their kind. Though he lacks the profound point of view at the centre of his work which

would make him another Molière (someone once compared him to Molière) though his comedies have no real point, do not even pretend to be going anywhere in particular, he manages to strike off passages by the way which are quite in the tradition of Molière and by no means unworthy of him. He has done a number of scenes between lovers which have a real comic truth; and there hangs always over his silliest dialogue a wing of philosophic wit which brushes everything he writes with distinction. Furthermore, there are his wonderful Parisiennes, drawn with a genuine gusto and affection: the flapper in *THE GRAND DUKE*, the little music-hall singer in *L'ILLUSIONISTE*, the unfaithful and wide-eyed wife in *LE MARI, LA FEMME ET L'AMANT*. They are *gauche*, naïve, witty, and adorable, like Printemps, who plays them, herself. They are the facets of Printemps, who is herself the gamin spirit of Paris.

I do not blame American audiences for being sceptical about the legendary brilliance of the Guitrys: they have never had a chance to see much of it. First, the semi-serious—and inferior—pieces are chosen; then they are reduced to wholesomeness by Mr Belasco; then the *rôles* are played by romantic actors who insist upon taking them more seriously still. But even if someone put on *L'ILLUSIONISTE*, for example, I wonder if it would ever really reach us. Even if the wit did not evaporate in translation, who could be found to play the principal *rôles*—to supply the intellectualized farce of Sacha and the innocent sophistication of his wife? Not, at any rate, I am afraid, Mr Atwill and Miss Elsie Mackay.

Mr Pinero's *ENCHANTED COTTAGE* is a fantasy without any fancy. Instead, you have soft music, red fire, and old-fashioned masquerade costumes. When the gauze curtain of enchantment has descended you are startled by blinding violet flashes which you take at first for short circuits in the scenery; but it is only Mr Brady's idea of a star-dust of fairy fire. In the end, there is a phantom child which suggests the old illustrated songs.—Miss Katharine Cornell is quite good in her inhibited first act, but in the later more lively ones her vivacity seems to cost an effort.

EDMUND WILSON, JR.

COMMENT

IT was precisely in Paris (where we had gone to see a man about a painting) that we read an editorial in *The Literary Review* which flattered us to the point of bedazzlement and then struck home. Magazines travel more slowly than ideas, so we will reprint the blow (assuming that the bouquets remain fresh in the ever-grateful memories of our readers):

"*The Dial* apparently would have us make the same mistake over again [the mistake of Longfellow]. Here, its editors say—by implication and sometimes directly—here is the way to write; these are the subjects, these the methods of modern European literature; go you and do likewise and we shall have an American literature! . . .

"But we do not want another age of Longfellow. Bring Europe to us by all means and in every measure. Encourage us to experiment, break down the prejudices that withhold us from novelty, fertilize the American soil with ideas from abroad; but don't tell us to write like Schnitzler, D. H. Lawrence, or Paul Fort, or any one else whose environment and tradition are utterly different from our own. Ever since the mid-eighteenth century, when Americans began to feel that they were not Europeans, some worthy missionary or another has been bringing in Europe to civilize us, saying: 'Drink this; then act like little Europeans, and your souls will be saved.' And those who like Hawthorne refused to act, or who, like Walt Whitman and Mark Twain, rejected the cup, have best pleased both the Europeans and ourselves. We thank *The Dial* and *Broom* and the rest for giving us more of Europe, but will not join them in acting Longfellow over again. That play is out of date."

The *Literary Review* owes a debt to *THE DIAL* which it proposes to acknowledge later. (We know this from the same article, which uses those words and specifies the indebtedness.) May we suggest that a revision of the statements quoted above would be a fair way to pay off? For they are, as far as they apply to us, sheer nonsense.

and if some stupidity of idea or carelessness of phrase has given any one the impression that we want Americans to write like Europeans or like Hindus, we are ready to go into sackcloth and Hergesheimer for six months. Have we really given American writers to believe that we are publishing the work of European writers as an object lesson? The discourtesy to the Europeans would be a little too great, and the insult to Americans too smart. And precisely like what Europeans do we want our Americans to write? Will Cabell be better for imitating Lawrence, or Anderson clear up his style by reading Morand, or Willa Cather gain an intensity by a study of Bunin? And will the result be worth a hang if there is a result? It has been our fear, precisely, that too many young Americans would begin writing like James Joyce; and the manuscripts we have rejected prove that our fear was well-grounded. Writing like anything or anybody is as good a way as any for a writer to get his manuscript back by return mail; and if what we have published in any case bears a resemblance to the work of some vast European genius, it will be found that the resemblance is due to an identity, a necessary and justifiable coincidence, in character or expression.

If we have already history behind us, if American letters owe us something, it is simply because we have never published anything or anybody for any reason but the one natural reason: because the work was good. We have published European work not as exotics and not as exemplars; only because we feel that Americans are at work in the same *milieu* and in the same tradition of letters as the Europeans—that we are all in the Western-civilized-Christian-European-American tradition, and that American letters have their independent existence and their separate, precious character, within that circle, just as German and Italian letters have. It is true that an Italian can say, I shall write in the manner of Petrarch (and as like as not miss the excellence of the tradition he aspires to) and an American, casting about for definite models will find few names to buoy him on. But the American who feels that he has not inherited Dean Swift as surely as he has inherited Mr Dooley, is simply missing half of his heritage and, unless he be a startling individual genius, will not write half so well. We have pointed out, perhaps too often, that the whole sighing for a background in America is due to the false, political feeling that we are cut off from

the main stream of European art and letters. There is no evidence of the fact—except for the wailing. Mr Sinclair Lewis has written two American books which owe more to Flaubert than anything Jean Cocteau or Paul Morand has created. And Huck Finn is accepted in Germany exactly as Tom Jones is accepted. Nor were we aware when we published Mr Anderson's *I'm a Fool* that it was written in the image—of whom? Perhaps The London Mercury which published the same story later thought it an imitation of something, or published it for young English writers to imitate. Perhaps—we offer the suggestion in a spirit of editorial confraternity—they thought it a good story.

But when we consider "implications"—does The Literary Review mean that a number of American writers, accustomed to praise elsewhere, are here treated with scant respect, while a number of European writers are praised in our pages? It has been THE DIAL's habit to find intelligent reviewers and then to let them have as free a hand as any creative artist can have; no one has been instructed to praise or dispraise and delicate hints have generally had results the opposite of what we hoped; and if our reviewers have not been clubby about American books it is because that is how they feel, and it is our fault only because we've chosen the wrong men. A careful reading of our review pages will indicate that European writers have not got off easily; and if in the past two or three years a majority of the books we have praised have come from Europe—we do not know whether this is so or not—it has been their quality and not their provenance which has influenced us. The truth is that a few great Europeans are producing work of exceptional merit; that these books arrive in translation or in American editions; and as long as we believe that the love of letters knows no frontiers we are going to praise them—we, including our reviewers. And the equal truth is that for a long time American writers have not been subjected to serious and severe criticism, that they have lived on "notices" and puffs; and THE DIAL adds itself to the small number of journals which see no reason for praising a book except that the book deserves praise when viewed with the same unsentimental eye as looks out upon the literary scene abroad. It is no use saying that one ought to be more tender to Gertrude Atherton than to May Sinclair, because May Sinclair lives in a literary *milieu*; or that it will not help Anderson to be as severely handled as Schnitzler. We

fancy that not a few of the authors who have been mercilessly attacked in these pages prefer that attack to any suggestion that they are only in primary school and are not to be marked on the same scale as the bigger boys abroad. We aren't to be sure marking anybody or setting up prize-boys. We are discussing creative work.

If the work of European artists continues to be nobler in conception and more honest in execution than the work of Americans, we shall undoubtedly print the former in preference to the latter. But we ask *The Literary Review* to continue to watch what happens. It is barely possible that our greatest service to American letters will turn out to be our refusal to praise or to publish silly and slovenly and nearly-good-enough work. The Americans we publish have at least the certainty that we publish them not because they are Americans, but because they are artists.

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